SPARKS FROM THE VEDIC FIRE

[*A New Approach to Vedic Symbolism*]

(300/-)

By

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पूर्वेभ्य. पथिकृद्भ्य. ।

Adoration to the Primal Rishis
The Ancient Path-Finders.

(ऋग्वेद १०।१४।१५)

यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद्विस्फुलिङ्गा.
सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।
तथाक्षराद्विविधाः सोम्य भावाः
प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ॥

As, from a well-blazing fire, sparks
By the thousand issue forth of like form,
So from the Imperishable, my friend,
beings manifold
Are produced, and thither also go

(मुण्डक उप० २।१।१)

PREFACE

THE SEERS SPEAK ESOTERICALLY

आचक्षते परोक्षेण

The thought of the Rigveda is cast in the mould of symbols The symbol is a concrete object employed to convey an esoteric meaning Each material object is regarded as a symbol of the Divine Principle behind it. It is the concrete form of an abstract entity and is eloquent with the significance of its purposeful functioning The language of the cosmos is embodied in the material objects and its alphabet and meaning have to be discovered in them Each visible object stands as the envelope of a mystical meaning, which the eye of wisdom discerns [1]

The symbols represent an abiding language They have been with us since the beginning of time and are to remain till eternity. Human speech is subject to change and conditioned in time and place like other institutions But the symbols represent the language of infinite nature. They do not change or evolve

The Sun and the Moon, the Ocean and the Waters, the Fire and the Sky, the Heavens and the Earth, the Dawn and the Night—they are as they are [2] They are eternal Pegs fixed in the cosmic vault On these 'fenders' mystical meanings are hung and read by the Seers

Symbols were deliberately selected in preference to words as the only adequate means of expressing live and fresh meaning. The language of symbols shines beyond racial and regional limits Its depth depends on the power of the discerning mind

The Tree, the Forest, the Hill, the River, the Lake, the Well, the Cow, the Horse, the Man, the Birds, the Eagle, the Dragon,[3] these are all powerful symbols in the ageless *repertoire* of universal speech understood by men at all places and times

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1. *Bhūteshu bhūteshu vichitya dhīrāḥ* (Kena Up 2.5).

2 *Sūrya, Chandra, Samudra, Āpaḥ, Agni, Ākāśa, Dyauḥ, Pṛthivī, Ushā, Rātrī.*

3. *Vanaspati, Vana, Sānu (Adri), Sindhu, Saras, Utsa, Gauḥ, Aśva, Purusha Suparṇa, Śyena, Ahi,*

Similarly family relationships are familiar to us as intimate entities. Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Son, Daughter, these are household truths of life. They are manifestations of that essential Power or Substance called Life They remain with us from birth Their meaning becomes deep seated in the heart of each sentient being.

As expressive of Man's deepest bonds with Nature the value of symbols is that of Axioms of which the truth is established beyond proof.

Man made objects also serve as symbols, e g the gyrating Wheel, the moving Car, the Full Vase, the Bowl, the House, the Doors, the Wooden Vat, the Fire-pan, the Bricks, the Pillar, the Bow, the Arrow,[1] etc

Numbers also possess great value as symbols or pointers of mystical meanings, for example, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 24, 27, 33, 34, 36, 40, 44, 48, 60, 90, 100, 1000—these numbers punctuate a rich and colourful spectrum of cosmic meanings and universal metaphysics formulated by the Rishis

The *language* of the Rigveda is not to be traced in the lexical mould of apparent words and meanings It is essentially the language of symbol-phonemes, designed to explain the mystical working of the cosmos on the parallel planes of Life (*Prāṇa*), Mind (*Manas*), and Matter (*Vāk*) These are known as the Three Brothers of Agni, or equivalent to the Seven Sons of Aditi, who is the Great Mother Goddess or Infinite Nature The Seers speak mystically, for the Gods love the mystic[2]

For instance, the Cow is *par excellence* the symbol of living organism producing milk. She eats simple grass and fodder produced by rain water The mysterious chemistry of the cow's body converts water into milk. But the cow does not yield milk unless she gives birth to the calf. She is fecundated by the Bull, her sire, and then she calves Milk is thus the symbol of motherhood Wherever there is milk there is motherhood Cow's love for the suckling calf becomes concrete as milk What is the difference between water and milk ? Milk is water permeated by tiny globules of butter Affection in the mother's heart is made visible in the miracle of milk Milk is therefore the appropriate symbol of generation and motherhood How does milk get its butter contents ? The mystery of butter gives the answer The seer points out · 'Butter is Fire'[3] Fire is put out by water, but

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1. *Chakra, Ratha, Pūrna Kumbha, Chamasa, Gṛiha* or *Dama, Devīḥ Dvāraḥ, Drona Kalaśa, Ukhā, Ishṭakā, Skambha, Pināka, Ishu*

2 *Āchakshate parokshena, paroksha-priyā vai devāḥ*
आचक्षते परोक्षेण, परोक्षप्रिया वै देवा. ।

3. *Āgneyam vai ghṛitam* (Śatapatha, 7 4 1 41 , 9 2.2 3) *Etad vai pratyakshād yajña-rūpam yad ghṛitam* (Śat, 12.8.2.15)

blazes by butter Fire and butter are thus of identical brand, both being forms of energy The seed in the sire is the fertilising male principle deposited in the female to procreate The male is symbolised as Agni, the Fiery Energy and the Female as Soma, its Watery counterpart It is the contact with the bull that confers on the cow the potency to change water into milk The cow as the symbol of motherhood commands extensive description in the Rigveda She is identical with Infinite Nature whose progenitive power is boundless and who is the divine mother of men, animals, birds, living creatures and plants The process of generation is of the same pattern for all organic beings The Rishis have therefore employed a common or parallel language applicable to all these in such terms as Aditi, Devas, Yajña, Gauh, Payas, Ghṛita, Retas, Chakra, Kāla, Aśva, Samvatsara, Ushā, Hiranya, Prāṇa, Sūrya, Indra, Agni, and a host of others

The symbolical approach is thus the 'Open Sesame' to Vedic exegesis It opens a new door and puts us in possession of an unprecedented richness of meanings It was in fact the ancient traditional approach embodied in the Brāhmanas This evidence is ambrosial for a fresh attuning of the mind with the thoughts of the Rishis in the mantras It should therefore be welcome to Vedic scholars everywhere The exploding meaning of the symbol in a mantra is as gladdening as divine encounter The problem of Vedic interpretation is essentially the problem of decoding the meaning of symbols employed by the Rishis with deliberate choice Symbolical meanings serve as vibrations emanating from the Bhūtas and leading to the Devas (देवं वहन्ति केतवः) The Bhūtas or material objects may be simple and ordinary objects, but they are idealised and become transformed into radiant entities of the highest value, e g the Tree becomes the Tree of Existence, the Forest as the highest Brahman unlimited in time and space Even the household Jar is treated as the symbol of the cosmos and the human Body full with all the possibilities of existence, and the familiar Pestle and Mortar signify the two Clashing Rocks or the opposite principles of Prāṇa and Apāna The Barking Hound is the symbol of Indra as Ākāśa which is the source of speech, or Vāk The croaking Frog (*Maṇḍūka*) is the sign of the individuated Prāna stirred to life by the drops of heavenly clouds or the Universal Life-principles moistening the earth (भूमिं पर्जन्या जिन्वन्ति, I. 164. 51).

It should be remembered that the symbolical meanings descend like an avalanche The Vedas cannot be treated as individual strands. One should be willing to reckon with a whole skein entangled in the extreme The stout heart of the enquirer should expect not a few stray threads but the whole cloth woven by the subtlest minds It seems that everything is related to everything else. The Divine scheme of creation is like this, an unending inter-linking without

fixed priorities, where one cannot insist on logical sequences It is a case of extremely elastic formulations One should be prepared to love this approach to meanings as the milkman loves the milk of his cow The Veda is कामदुघा वाक्, the Milk at-Will Cow and the Mind is her Calf.

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8–1–1962

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CONTENTS

1 PRAJĀPATI [प्रजापति] pp 1–5

प्रजापति as the substratum p 1, इदं सर्वम् or the world as प्रजा p 1, meaning of अधिष्ठान, अम्भृण and आरम्भण p 1, different names of क or Unmanifest प्रजापति p 1, अन्तरजायमान or Unborn प्रजापति and बहुधा विजायते or Manifest प्रजापति p 2, प्रजापति as ऊर्ध्वं and अव p 2, as This and That p. 2, as अनिरुक्त and निरुक्त p 2, हृदय and वाक् p 3, p 3, as नभ्य or गुह्य and महिमा p 3, as अन्नाद and अन्न p 4, as अमृत and मर्त्य p 4, as संप्रश्न and तूष्णीम् p 4, as God of gods p 5

2 AGNI [अग्नि] pp 6–13

अग्नि as the immortal divine principle amongst mortals p 6, अग्नि as Prāna or Life p 6, अग्नि as the trinitarian principle p 6; अग्नि as Mind—Life—Matter p 6, Three Brothers of Agni, एकत, द्वित and त्रित, or शुचि-पावक-पवमान p 6, अग्नि as अन्नाद and सोम as अन्न p 7, अग्नि as यज्ञ p 7, अदिति and दक्ष as Mother and Son, also as Daughter and Father p. 7, अग्नि as त्र्यम्बक or the Son of Three Mothers p 7, अग्नि as Rudra p 7, रुद्र as अशनाया or Hunger p 7, रुद्र as मन्युप्राण or दग्ध p 7, शिव अग्नि with सोम p 8, रुद्र अग्नि without सोम p 8, अग्नि as शुष्क and सोम as आर्द्र p 8, अग्नि-वायु-आदित्य as the three forms of अग्नि p 8, symbolism of the Three Fires p 8, अग्नि as Heat p 9, generated by friction or clashing forces called उपांशु अन्तर्याम or प्राणापान p 9, अग्नि as देवौष्ण्य and अग्रज तपस् p 9; two aranis or the two parents of Agni p 9, अग्नि as Son of Waters (Apāṁ Napāt) p 9; meaning of Āpah as Primordial Prakṛiti p 9, Virāj or the Cosmic Cow p 9, Agni as the Primeval Bull p 9, Agni as Nārāyana Purusha p 10, Ocean of Milk (Kshīra-Samudra) p. 10; Conversion of water into milk is creation p 10, symbolism of Ghrita p 10, Ghṛita as fertilising seed p 11, Agni as Prishad Ājya p 11, Sun as the calf of Universal Cow p 11, symbolism of Yajña p, 12, Yajña as the revolving wheel of Time p. 12, symbolism of Purushamedha, Aśvamedha and Gomedha p 12, Agni-chayana p 12, Golden Reed or the Body p 12, Agni as Kumāra or the Babe p 12, Agni as Chitra Śiśu or the Miraculous Boy p 13; Samañchana-prasārana or contraction and expansion p 13

3 HIRANYAGARBHA [हिरण्यगर्भ] pp 14–28

Symbolism of Salilam p. 14; meaning of Gaurī and Gau p 14; Vṛitra and Indra p 14, Agni in the Womb of Waters, as the Spirit of the Gods, as Satya,

Hiranya, Prāna, Sūrya, Nārāyana p 15, Ekārnava-vidhi p 15, the Primeval Watery Floods p 16, Samudra or the one ocean p. 16, symbolism of Vishnu sleeping on the Cosmic Serpent p 16, meaning of Śesha p 17, the Self-Existent or Svayambhū as the First Principle p 18, meaning of Hiranya-garbha, Agni as Hiranya or Gold p 18, Prāna as Gold p 19, the symbolism of the Five Deities, Creation as the Kāmapra Yajña or Wish-fulfilling Sacrifice of the Creator p 19, Kshobha as the principle of Motion, Nidrā or Sleep as that of Rest p 20, Rajas and Akshara as Motion p 21, Vasishtha as Prāna p 21, the Virāj as the Mother or Egg p 22, symbolism of Aditi and her eighth son Mārtānda or the Sun p 23, the Golden Bird of Time on a thousand days' Flight p 24, meaning of Virāja Manu p. 24, Hiranyagarbha as Sūrya p 24, significance of Anda and its Seven Sheaths p 25, Rishi Mārkandeya as the symbol of Time p 25, Nārāyana Purusha within the Egg p 26, meaning of the Viśvasṛij Principles p 27; the Golden Egg as the offspring of the Cosmic Cow p 28

4 THE SYMBOLISM OF THE THREE BROTHERS pp 29-39

The first Mantra of the Asyavāmīya Sūkta of the Rigveda, I 164 1 explained p 29, Three Brothers as Agni-Vāyu-Āditya p 30, related to Agni as Vaiśvānara p 30, Vaiśvānara as the Life Principle, the ever-moving Ancient Star or Sūrya p 31, Rigveda Sūkta X 88 pp 31-32, meaning of Vāma and Palita p 33, symbolism of the Dwarf (Vāmana) and the Cosmic (Virāt) forms of Vishnu p. 34, Vishnu as the First Brother typifying Growth p 34, Middle Brother as voracious eater, pot-bellied Brahmā typifying the principle of Anna-Annāda, Assimilation and Elimination p 35, Third Brother as Śiva typifying the progenitive faculty of life p 35; Tri Purusha conception of the Veda p 35; meaning of Viśpati and Sapta-putra or the Seven Sons of Agni p 36, symbolism of Ghṛita and of the Cosmic Cow Aditi p 37, the Parental Pair of Dyāvā-Prithvī p. 38

5 THE ONE-FOOTED GOAT [अज एकपाद्] pp 40-43

Aja, the unborn creator, equated with Ekam, symbol of Garbha Prajāpati p 40, Ekapād as the symbol of Rest, same as Nidrā or Sleep p. 41; One-footed Goat as symbol of the absence of motion p 41, same as Apād, the Footless One p 42, meaning of Black and White p 42, Sun as the symbol of Pāda or Motion or manifest activity p 43

6 GAURĪ [गौरी] pp. 44-51

Rigveda I 164 41 explained p 44· Gaurī, the female *Bos Gaurus* as the symbol of Varuna's Waters and the cow as that of Sūrya p. 44, Gaurī as Vāk p 45, meaning of *mimāyi*, lowing and measuring p 45, Viśvarūpya, the Omniform

cosmos symbolised as Three Yojanas or Three Units of Motion p 46, significance of *Salilāni* or Waters of the primeval ocean p 46, *Takshatī* as fashioning of forms or differentiation p 47, Ekapadī as the symbol of stasis (*sthiti*) p 48, Dvipadī as the symbol of the contrasted basal dichotomy of creation p 48; Chatushpadī as the symbol of Four-footed Brahman comprising the Transcendent and Immanent aspects p 49, Ashtāpadī as the mother of the Eight Vasus p 49; Navapadī as the symbol of Brihatī comprising all the possibilities of existence p 50, Sahasrākshara or the Thousand syllabled Vāk as the symbol of the transcendent unmanifest source p 51, Parama Vyoma as the symbol of the Highest Brahman p. 51.

7 SUPARNA [सुपर्ण] pp 52-60

Prajāpati as Suparṇa p 52, Parna as Wing implies rhythmic motion, same as Pāda and Chakra p 52, the Year as the Great Bird p 52; Sūrya as the Golden-pinioned Bird p. 53, Suparna as Chhandas or Rhythm p 53, Suparna as Vishnu's Chakra p 54, Conception of the Round Wheel with four Nineties p 54; Suparna as Patanga p 54, Prāṇa as rhythmic pulsation p. 54, Flapping of wings by Prajāpati p 55, meaning of Suparna-chiti altar as the body of each organism p 55, Chite-nidheya as the immortal and Chityāgni as the mortal principles p. 56, the Sapta-Purusha as the three-dimensional physical organism p 56, symbolism of Dyauh as the immortal essence p. 56, Suparna carrying off the heavenly Soma p 57, Suparna Saga explained p 57, the feud between Garuda and Nāgas p 57; the Quail seized by Suparna p 58, Trisuparna legend p 58, meaning of Suparṇī and Kadrū p 58, meaning of the Three Birds Gāyatrī-Trishtup-Jagatī p 58, Aditi as the Double-headed Eagle p 59, the two fold oscillating motion of *Eti cha-Preti cha* p 59, Life as a three staged Gāyatra chant or thrice-fueled Fire p. 60,

8 NASADĪYA SŪKTA [नासदीय सूक्त] pp 61-77

Rigveda X 129 Sūkta comprising ten philosophical doctrines, viz, Sadasad vāda p 61; Rajovāda p 61, Vyoma vāda p 62, Apara-vāda p 63; Āvarana vāda p 63, Ambho vāda p 64, Amrita-Mrityu-Vāda p 66, Ahorātra-vāda p 66, Daiva-vāda p 68, Samśaya-vāda p 69, the Tripurusha conception, viz Para-Parāvara-Avara, or Aja-Akshara-Kshara p 70, meaning of Tat p. 71; of Ekam p 71, of Ānīt p 72, Svadhā p 72, Tamas p 72; Salilam p 72; Tuchchhya and Ābhu p 72, Ekam as the Navel of Yajña p 73, Manas, the Individuating Principle of the Mind p 73, Manas as Manu p 73, Kāma as the seed of mind p 74, Kinship of Sat (material creation) with Asat (Prāna or Energy) p. 74, Adhah and Ūrdhva p 74, Father as Retodhā and Mother as Mahimānah p 75; Prayati as Svayambhū and Svadhā as Virāj p 75; Devas as the symbol of

Yajña, first appearing in Sūrya p 76, Brahma-vāda doctrine p. 76; text of the Nāsadīya Sūkta p 77.

9. THE RIDDLES OF RISHI VASUKRA pp 78-106

Rigveda Sūktas X 27 and X 28 stated in the form of enigmas and riddles, their obscure symbolism explained p 78, cooking of the Spotted Bull p 78, meaning of the fifttenfold Soma-juice p 79, Cows and their Herdsman p 79, the Five Modes of manifestation p 80, Eating of barley by the cows p 81, the unyoked and the yoked animals p 82, the allegory of the Blind Daughter p 83, Four enigmatical statements explained p 83, the Tree of Existence, shadowless and leafless p 84, the Mother stationary and the Youngling loosed and feeding p 84, symbolism of the Two Cows, the Calf of the first suckled with milk by the second p 85, the revivifying Life-principle as the Calf p 86, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten Heroes explained pp. 86-88, Heroes carrying winnowing baskets p 88, Kapila as the Chief, symbol of Sūrya p 89; symbolism of the Fat Sheep, the Dice thrown in sport, and the Two Bows in the celestial waters pp 90-91, one half of the Heroes cook, not the other p 92, symbolism of the Aṅgirases and the Bhrigus p 92, Purusha as Deva grāma p 93, Two Bulls yoked to the car of the Body, Manas and Prāṇa p 93, immortal glory of the Universal p 94, the Cow tied to each Tree pp. 94-95, lowing of the Cow p 95; the Man consuming Birds and their flying p 96, Three Fires and Two Somas pp 97-98; mystery of Life as the supreme objective of knowledge p. 99, Yajña as the veiling Robe, p 99, Indra as the bellowing Bull p. 100 Rivers flowing backwards p 100; symbolism of the Fox challenging the Lion, and the Jackal driving the Wild Boar p. 100, Deities with axes, splitting timber and burning it in the fire-receivers p 101; meaning of Kripīta or Brushwood p 101; the Hare swallowing the razor p 102, the Clod sundering the mountain p 102, the Calf eating the Bull p 102, the Bird raiding the world of Gods and leaving behind its talon p 103, the thirsty wild Steer and his leathern strap p 103, Five Bulls set free to wander p 103, Śamī as the symbol of Soma and Aśvattha of Agni p 104, text of the Sūktas pp 104-106

10 THE ONE RUDRA AND THE MANY pp 107-116

One Rudra as the Unmanifest Principle p 107, Avyakta symbolised as Liṅga p 107, A Thousand Rudras as the immanent powers called Gaṇas or Pramathas p 107, Aditi as the immortal continuous type and Diti as the discontinuous under-world p 107; Rudra decapitating Daksha p 107, meaning of Daksha's Goat-head p 108, Rudra as Agni, Indra and Sūrya p 108; symbolism of Agni-Soma p 109; Āpah or Soma as Umā p 110, Rudra Siva as Yati. the

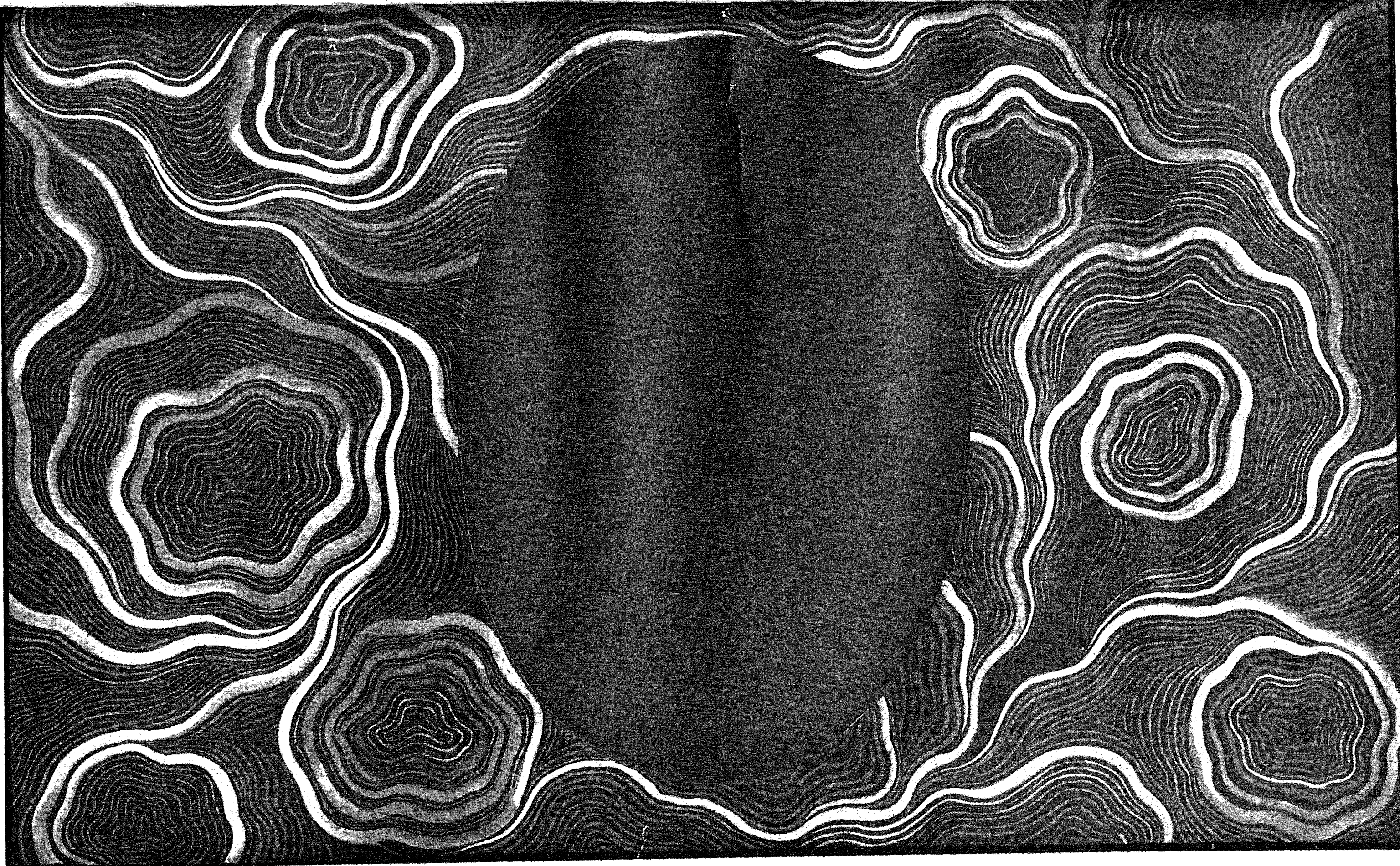
archetypal Yogī or Ascetic p 111, Yama or Sūrya as the regulating principle behind the cosmic order p 111, Sūrya as Indra and Rudra p 112, the One and Many Yatis p 112, Dance of the Yatis and Śiva's Tāndava p 113, the team of Eleven Rudras p 113, the symbolism of Aja Ekapād and other Rudras p 113, the Rodasī world of Rudra p 113, symbolism of the Seven Yatis p 114, each Deva associated with one Yati p 114, the Sālāvrika symbolism, Life-principle in the individual centre p 115, Prāna as Lion, Tiger or Hyena feeding on the blood of "earth" or material manifestation p 115, conversion of water into blood and of blood into "seed" as the arch mystery of creation p 116, Lion as the symbol of the Five Gross Elements p 116, each Lion fastened with the bonds of Vaiśvānara Fire p 116.

11 ASHṬAMŪRTI ŚIVA [अष्टमूर्ति शिव] pp 117-122

Ashtamūrti form of Śiva according to Kālidāsa p 117, corresponding to the ancient Vedic conception of the Eight Vasus p 118, same as the Kumāra Vidyā of the Brāhmanas p 119, 'Wonderful Child' of the Rigveda p 119; Agni as Rudra p 119, Weeping as the principle of Hunger and Awakening of the Sleeping Child p 119, Eight Names of Agni-Rudra p 119, Puranic tradition p 120, Explanation of the Eight Forms, Mind-Life-Matter p 120, Ashtamūrti as the Śarabha form of Śiva pp 120-121, the four lower and the four upper feet of Śarabha explained p 121, the Ashta-pushpikā worship or the Eight Flower-Handfuls p 121, Ugra form of Śiva p 122

12 PURĀNA–VIDYĀ [पुराण-विद्या] pp 123-132

Purānas rooted in the Vedas p. 123, the lore of creation (Sṛishti vidyā) as the main topic of the Vedas and the Purānas p. 123, both have adopted the language of symbolism p 123, the different Vidyās or Points of View in Vedic literature p 124, Prajāpati-vidyā as the supreme point of view p 125, same as Agni vidyā or Sūrya vidyā p 125, symbolism of Śesha śāyī Vishnu p 125, Three Strides of Vishnu or the Tri-Purusha-vidyā p 127, Vāmana and Virāt p 128, Daksha-Aditi-vidyā p 129, Brahmaudana and Pravargya Vidyā p 129, Pañcha-varāha-vidyā p 129; Agni chayana-vidyā p 130; Kumāra-vidyā p 130, the oblique birth symbolism p 131, Soma-vidyā and Samudra-manthana, Manvantara and Ahorātra-vidyā, Sāvitra-vidyā and Sāvitrī-Satyavān legend etc, p 132



हिरण्यगर्भ—The GOLDEN GERM Symbolising the Birth of the Cosmos

An old Kangra Painting (circa 1775–1800)

हिरण्मयः स पुरुषः सहस्रपरिवत्सरान् । आण्डकोश उवासाप्सु सर्वसत्त्वोपबृंहितः ।। भागवत ३।६।६

That Golden Person, energising as all beings, lived for a thousand years in the Egg-sheath floating in the primeval Waters.

1. PRAJĀPATI [प्रजापति]

Prajāpati is the primeval principle of creation :

तद्यदब्रवीत् प्रजापतेः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पालयस्वेति तस्मात्प्रजापतिरभवत् तत्प्रजापतेः प्रजापतित्वम् (गोपथ ब्रा० १।१।४)।

The eternal substratum, substance and principle of creation is ultimately Brahman. He becomes Prajāpati for the purpose of creation. Cosmos is called 'इदं सर्वम्' or प्रजा, and its Lord is प्रजापति.

The creative process unfolds itself in time and space. Its substratum is called अधिष्ठान in the Veda, it is the same as आलम्बन. The material cause is called आरम्भण, same as उपादान. The efficient cause is known as प्रभण :

अनारम्भणे यदवीरयेथामनास्थाने अग्रभणे समुद्रे। (RV. I. 116 5)

किंस्विदासीदधिष्ठानमारम्भणं कतमत्स्वित्कथासीत्।

यतो भूमि जनयन्विश्वकर्मा वि द्यामौर्णोन्महिना विश्वचक्षा.॥ (RV X. 81 2)

'O Aśvins, you wrought that hero (Bhujyu) exploit in the ocean which giveth no support, no hold, or station' (Griffith)

'What was the place whereon he took his station ? What was it that supported him ? How was it ?

'Whence Viśvakarman, seeing all, producing the earth, with mighty power, disclosed the heavens' (Griffith)

In the above stanzas the three words अधिष्ठान, आरम्भण, प्रभण should be clearly distinguished, which the translator has not done·

1 अधिष्ठान—आलम्बन—अव्यय ब्रह्म—प्रज्ञान or मनस्

2 प्रभण – निमित्तकारण—अक्षर ब्रह्म—प्राण

3 आरम्भण—उपादानकारण—क्षर ब्रह्म—भूत

Prajāpati is defined as चतुष्पाद् ब्रह्म, Four-footed Brahman The above three are his three feet, the fourth is the unmanifest one that is known as .

(1)	गर्भ	(8)	अग्र प्रजापति
(2)	गुहा	(9)	एक प्रजापति
(3)	हृदय	(10)	क प्रजापति
(4)	नाभि	(11)	अनिरुक्त प्रजापति
(5)	उक्थ	(12)	अमूर्त प्रजापति
(6)	अव्यक्त	(13)	अमृत प्रजापति
(7)	केन्द्र	(14)	परोक्ष प्रजापति

All these words signify the same principle. Under many names the same primeval principle, that which was *ante principium*, is explained in the Vedic language of the Samhitās and Brāhmanas .

प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अन्तरजायमानो बहुधा वि जायते ।

तस्य योनि परि पश्यन्ति धीरास्तस्मिन्ह तस्थुर्भुवनानि विश्वा ॥ (यजु ३१।१९)

उभयम्वेतत्प्रजापतिर्निरुक्तश्चानिरुक्तश्च परिमितश्चापरिमितश्च (शतपथ ६।५।३।७)

एक उ वे प्रजापतिः (कौषीतकी 29 7)

प्रजापतिर्वै क. (ऐतरेय 2 38 , शतपथ 6. 4 3. 4)

This प्रजापति is क—What ? He is also called संप्रश्न प्रजापति—the Great Question ? He is the eternal mystery, the endless sign of Interrogation ; He is गुहा, a Cave , He is नाभि, the Navel or source from which everything or All This (इदं सर्वं) proceeds He is उक्थ, from which all else takes its rise He is called गर्भप्रजापति, the Womb of creation, as in the above mantra—प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे. When in the womb, He is unborn, unmanifest , from that secret source He manifests Himself as the many. The One becomes the Many .

बहुधा विजायते

He, the one source is अमृत, Immortal, since He is beyond time and space. That which becomes subject to Time-Space relata is इदं सर्वम्, विश्व भुवनं, प्रजा, मर्त्य, निरुक्त or प्रत्यक्ष, etc

The oblation that is intended for 'Ka' Prajāpati is without speech, without mantra, or invocation, since everything that is not 'named' or defined belongs to Him. Any thing that is not described as the circle or circumference, remains merged in the centre Prajāpati is that Centre, rightly called हृदय, the Heart. Another name for Him is ऊर्ध्वं, the creation is अध. , the centre is ऊर्ध्वं, the circumference is अध'—

ऊर्ध्वमूलमध.शाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।

Aśvattha is the Tree of Existence, the Ash Tree or Yggdrasil of Nordic mythology of which the Past, Present & Future are the three roots

Prajāpati is That (असौ—तत्).

Cosmos is This (अदः—एतत्).

The whole Prajāpati is both This and That.

As This, Prajāpati is manifest & mortal , as That, Prajāpati is unmanifest and immortal.

The Uumanifest is अनिरुक्त or तूष्णीम्

The Manifest is निरुक्त or शब्द or वाक् :—

स यदुपांशु तत्प्राजापत्यं रूपम् (शतपथ I 6 3 27).

Prajāpati is उपांशु or Silence—तूष्णीम्—where word (वाक्) does not reach वाक् is the symbol of the *Pañcha Bhūtas*, the Five Elements of Creation. *Vāk* is the attribute of आकाश, and आकाश is the first of the *Bhūtas*, the most subtle manifestation. In Veda, वाक् is synonymous with भुतसृष्टि or material creation प्रजापति in its dual aspect is both मनस् the unmanifest principle and वाक् the manifest material world :

स (प्रजापति.) तूष्णी मनसा ध्यायत्तस्य यन्मनस्यासीत्तद् बृहत्समभवत् (ताण्ड्य 7. 6. I)

य प्रजापतिस्तन्मन. (जैमिनीय उप० ब्रा० १।३३।२),

एष प्रजापर्तिर्यद्धृदयम् (शतपथ १४।५।४१)

As explained above प्रजापति is हृदय, the secret cavity of the heart, *i e* the centre of individuation Mind or मनस् is said to be हृत्प्रतिष्ठ, *i e* established on the substratum of the creating centre, the First Cause which becomes active Again, in His manifest form Prajāpati has become All This (इदं सर्वम्), *i e* these worlds The symbol for the material creation is वाक् It is therefore said that Prajāpati is वाक् —

वाग् वै प्रजापति. (शत० ५।१।५।६)

प्रजापतिर्हि वाक् (तैत्तरीय १।३।४।५).

There is the essential difference between अनिरुक्त and निरुक्त, मनस् and वाक्, the Unmanifest and the Manifest, the परोक्ष and the प्रत्यक्ष. What is परोक्ष or hidden is called देव, what is प्रत्यक्ष, दृश्य, स्थूल, manifest, visible, within the orbit of sense experience is भूत. Creation is the result of देव and भूत getting together

The अनिरुक्त प्रजापति is called नभ्य that which inheres in the नाभि or centre, the गुह्य principle, the hidden source of अग्नि which is the archetype of the Creator :

एष वै प्रजापति. यदग्निः (तै० १।१।५।५)

प्रजापतिरेषो अग्निः (शतपथ ६।५।३।७)

प्रजापतिरग्नि. (शतपथ ६।२।१।२३)

अग्निर्वै देवताना मुखं प्रजनयिता स प्रजापतिः (श० २।५।१।५)

अग्नि is the cosmic प्राण, the life-principle which becomes operative through the body, governing the process of assimilation and its opposite elimination—the systole and diastole of the cosmos and of each living centre The twin aspects of प्रजापति are essentially One— एकं वा इदं विबभव सर्वम्, the One has become the Many.

एकं = इदं सर्वम् = विश्व भुवन

एकं is नभ्य प्रजापति ; इदं सर्वम् is महिमा प्रजापति. The manifest worlds are the महिमा—एतावानस्य महिमा (RV X. 90. 3)

प्रजापति is अन्नाद, the Eater, and महिमा is अन्न or Food. That which is above Food, *i. e* not within the grip of hunger that seeks food, is अमृतं, which signifies eternal satiation:

उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति । (RV X. 90 2)

The material word is वाक् which is the same as अन्न or महिमा—

वाग्वा अस्य प्रजापतेः स्वो महिमा (शत० २।२।४।४).

वाक् or the Five Elements represent and constitute the महिमा, or greatness of प्रजापति The circumference or periphery is always and in its fullest sense the महिमा or महद्भाव of the centre The centre and the circumference do not exist in a vacuum, they are not disjointed or isolated, but knit with the closest ties, expressive of innumerable strains and stresses mutually exercised and the two stand stable within the field of forces they create through the principle of manifestation. That is the inherent relationship between the नभ्य or हृदय प्रजापति and the महिमा प्रजापति, *i. e* between the One and the Many:

एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति । (ऋ० १।१६४।४६)

The Seers declare the One to be many. The One becomes many through Names and Forms. He is the dispenser of names to the several deities.

यो देवाना नामधा एक एव तं संप्रश्नं भुवना यन्त्यन्या । (ऋ० १०।८२।३)

The Creator (विश्वकर्मा प्रजापति) gives their "names," that is to say their individual being to the Devas, the eternal entities or manifold principles of creation, but Himself remains a mystery, a question (संप्रश्न)—into that संप्रश्न are merged all these worlds, *i e.* lose their Name and Form The circumferences of varying dimensions all lose themselves in their source, the centre.

That which is संप्रश्न, the Great Question, is also the Great Secret. Prajāpati is eternal silence (तूष्णीम्) underlying all speech (वाक्) 'Silence is as deep as eternity, speech is shallow as time' (Carlyle) He is unknowable and unknown:

न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानान्यद् युष्माकमन्तरं बभूव ।
नीहारेण प्रावृता जल्प्या चासुतृप उक्थशासश्चरन्ति ॥ (ऋ० १०।८२।७)

'You will not find Him who produced these creatures: another thing has risen up amongst you
Enwrapt in misty cloud, with lips that stammer, hymn chanters wander and are discontented.'

We are factually surrounded by misty formations, the nebulae, those vast clouds of cosmic dust splashed by the dancing feet of those first principles whom they give "names" as the Devas:

यद्देवा अदः सलिले सुसंरब्धा अतिष्ठत ।
अत्रा वो नृत्यतामिव तीव्रो रेणुरजायत ॥ (ऋ० १०।७२।६)

'When ye, O Gods, in yonder deep close-clasping one another stood,
Thence, as of dancers, from your feet a thickening cloud of dust arose'

He, the uncreate Prajāpati stands supreme over all the forces that he has created He alone surveyed them all even when they were in the womb of those deep waters which held the seed of creation

यश्चिदापो महिना पर्यपश्यद्दक्षं दधाना जनयन्तीर्यज्ञम् ।
यो देवेष्वधिदेव एक आसीत् कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥ (ऋ० १०।१२१।५)

'He in his might surveyed the floods (the primeval ocean of energy) containing productive force (दक्षं) and generating worship (यज्ञ) He is the God of gods, and none beside him What God shall we adore with our oblation ?'

He is the क—नभ्य—गुह्य प्रजापति, himself both the answer and the question.

2. AGNI [अग्नि]

Agni is the supreme deity in the Rigveda It is spoken of as the immortal principle amongst mortals (*marteshv agnir amrito nidhāyi* Rv VII, 4, 4, *yo martyeshv amrita ritāvā hotā* Rv, I, 77 1, *idam jyotir amritam martyeshu*), the deathless light amongst those who are bound to die, the ever-lasting protector of the Law amongst those who are prone to perish In many hymns this special and divine feature of Agni is emphasized. As a matter of fact the gross material body is mortal and perishable and the divine Principle that resides within the body is Agni or Fire of Life To the Vedic seers the divine nature of Agni is the most patent fact. Agni, as we see it, is born of the sticks or fuel That is the manifestation of Agni on the material plane Energy becomes manifest only through matter. Therefore each Agni has a physical body, that is its fuel, when the fuel burns Agni becomes manifest. So the Fiery Energy within the body, its Life called *Prān*, is becoming manifest every day.

This Agni is threefold, it has three mothers, three births, three stations; its triple nature is spoken of in terms of its having three brothers This symbolism is amply elaborated, but not difficult to be understood Agni is the unique principle behind all this universal manifestation which we see in three forms, viz. plants, animals and men Organic life is found only on these three planes. This constitutes a basic trinity, viz Matter-Life-Mind, which in Vedic terminology correspond to the three divisions of the world, viz terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial. These are not spatial conceptions, but planes of consciousness The principles which govern these functions are named as Agni, Vāyu and Āditya. Basically there is one Agni, which becomes divided as three (*eka evāgnir bahudhā samiddhaḥ*, Rv VIII, 58, 2) All three are essential for manifestation: Agni as the terrestrial deity represents the principle of Matter, the Five Elements (*Bhūtas*), as the atmospheric deity the principle of Life (***Prāna***), and as the celestial deity the principle of mind (***Manas***).

These three aspects or principles must combine for the manifestation of organic beings All the three exist together. The Three Brothers form one common team, called *Ekata-Dvita-Trita*, or elsewhere as Śuchi, Pāvaka, Pavamāna Their combined appellation is Vaiśvānara, which literally signifies the unified aspect in which co exist the three Naras or energising principles essential for manifestation. For example, within the human body the metabolic fire is termed Vaiśvānara which burns the food that is eaten and then starts a chemical chain for converting the gross mass into secretions of various kinds, including blood and its resulting

sheaths like flesh, bones, marrow, and ultimately the grey matter of the brain and the seed or germ which continues the progenitive process. The creative functional process of Agni is described as a Yajña, in which the Deva or the principle of Energy transforms the principle of matter, the latter being called Soma. Agni is the "eater of food" (*Annāda*) and Soma is "the food" (*Anna*). The union of Agni and Soma, of Anna and Annāda, of Yoshā and Vṛishā (Male Female), i e of Energy and Matter, or Heaven and Earth (Dyāvā-pṛithivī) means the complete rotation of the wheel, or the cyclic process of life called Yajña.

All manifestation of Agni or Energy at a point and within a system is Yajña. The creation on the cosmic plane is Universal Sacrifice (*Virāt Yajña*) in which the Creator offers himself as the *Āhuti* (offering). It is called a *Sarvahuta Yajña* in the Ṛigveda (X 90 8 9). Who is the Purusha or Prajāpati of this cosmic Yajña? It is Agni, Infinite Nature, the Cosmic Energy with its inherent active principle, i e. Aditi and Daksha together.

There is a clear symbology of cause and effect, both interdependent in the *ante principium* or *ab intra* stage of the cosmos. Aditi is the Mother and Daksha (the symbol of active sacrifice (progenition) is her Son. From another point of view Daksha (as the dormant principle of preceding active manifestation) is the Father and Aditi as the energy of each individual Yajña is his daughter (Rv. X 72. 4-5).

As noted above the single principle of Energy becomes differentiated as Matter, Life and Mind. These are the three births of Agni, his three dear stations, three Mothers. Agni is therefore called *Tryambaka* (Rv VII 59 12), which is also an epithet of Rudra, because Agni and Rudra are identical according to the universally accepted statement of the Brāhmaṇas (*Agnir vai Rudraḥ*, Śatapatha V, 3 1 10, VI 1 3 10, Tāndya XII 4 24, Taittirīya I 1 5 8-9, I 1 6 6, I 1 8 4) and also the enunciation of the Rigveda (II 1 6, *tvam Agne Rudraḥ*). As a matter of fact, the ancient eytmologists and exegetes had good reason to speak of Agni as Rudra. Rudra is the principle of "hunger" (*aśanāyā*), or in simple terms "assimilation" that pervades each living system confined or active within its Dyāvā-Prithivī, or the two valves of an organism. A fanciful etymology for Rudra is given, viz the principle of Life (*Madhya Prāna*, also called *Indha*, or esoterically Indra) when it is awakened or activated, *weeps* and therefore is called *rudra* (from the root *rud*, " to weep", Śatapatha VI 1 3 10). The implication is quite valid. It means that the sleeping nucleus of "life", the slumbering "child" within each "seed" becomes active and immediately it cries for "food" to sustain itself. When the eater is awakened, food must be given, that starts the process of assimilation and elimination, which is the elementary feature of life. This nucleus is Agni, who cries for Soma (cf. Ṛv V. 44.

15, Agni is awakened, to him Soma offers itself as a friend to reside in a common dwelling) Agni with Soma becomes quiet for a time, until its hungry temper is stirred again That is the auspicious form of Agni called Śiva. Its opposite is the awful or dire form (*Rudra* or *Ghora*), when Agni is without Soma or food it becomes the all-consuming fire that dries up the living contents and burns the body. Soma is the nectar or elixir of life and Rudra is propitiated with the ever-flowing drops of Soma. Rudra is also called Indra whose most favourite hobby is to quaff potions of Soma juice Soma is the opposite principle of Agni; the former the watery principle or moisture and the latter the fiery principle or heat (*yad vai śushkam yajñasya tadāgneyam .yadvā ārdram yajñasya tat saumyam*, Śatapatha III. 2 3 9-10)

Sūrya in heaven is a form of Agni "I honour as the face of lofty Agni in heaven the bright and holy light of Sūrya" (Rv I. 73 8) "Agni in this (world), Indra and Vāyu in the middle, Sūrya in heaven, are here to be recognized as the three deities. Owing to the majesty of these (deities) different names are applied (to each of them), (the diversity of names) here appears in this and that (sphere) according to the division of their respective spheres This is a manifestation of their power (*vibhūti*), that their names are various The poets, however, in their formulas say that these (deities) have a mutual origin (*anyonyayonitā*) (i e their becoming in earth or heaven is a birth from one another) Of what is and has been and is to be, and of what moves and is stationary,—of all this some regard the Sun alone to be the origin and the cause of dissolution Both of what is not and what is (*asataścha sataśchaiva*), this source is (really) Prajāpati, as (being) this eternal Brahma which is at once imperishable (*aksharam*) and the object of speech (*vāchyam*) He (the Sun), having divided himself into three, abides in these worlds, calling all the gods in due order to rest in his rays This (being) which, in the form of fire, abides in three forms in the worlds that have come into being, the seers adore with songs as manifested under three names". (Brihad-devatā, I 61-71).

Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya are spoken of as three different manifestations of one Essence (Ātmā) which is the Soul of the universal Divinity, the Prajāpati (*Ātmā sarvam devasya*, Nirukta VII, 4, Bṛhad-devatā I, 73)

In the symbolism of the ritual the essential single Fire variously becomes the Gārhapatya, the Dakshinā and the Āhavanīya This triple division corresponds to the basic trinity of Matter, Life and Mind, or Earth, Atmosphere and Heaven, or Mother, Child and Father, and so on. These are the three truths and the three births of Agni (Rv IV, I 7) With reference to these triple forms, the question is raised. How many are Agnis ? How many are the Suns ? (Rv. X, 88 18),

kindled in the sacrifice (*etad vai pratyakshād yajña-rūpam yad ghritam*, Śatapatha, XII 8 2 15) *Ghrita* is therefore taken as the symbol of fertilising seed (*retah-siktir vai ghritam*, Kaushītakī Br. 16 5, *reto vai ghritam*, Śatapatha IX. 2. 3. 44; Yajurveda XVII 79) Universal nature is the cosmic cow, universe is her milk; the life-principle is the butter in that milk, called *prishad ājya* in the Rigveda. From the *Sarvahuta Yajña* of the Creator, the quickening principle of Him, that is the seed which he deposited as Father in the womb of the Virāj, the Mother, was "dripping fat" which drop by drop was ejaculated and collected in a mass to permeate the entire ocean of water and change it into one of milk This "dripping fat" is Agni, and one may conceive of the principle of cosmic heat becoming manifest as a spark and gathering into a conflagration like that in our Sun, and millions of other such charged centres It is symbolically put as *sambhritam prishad ājyam*, Rv X 90 8) The Sun is the calf of the Universal Cow or Infinite Nature, and also the Bull that fecundates through its rays the Nature comprehended in the solar system or the vast worlds that revolve round the Sun and are held fast by it. The rays are the fertilising seed, or also spoken of as the myriad fleet cows which move in all directions supplying the milk containing butter, i e the principle of life with the two joint principles of Fire and Water, Agni-Soma, or Heat and Cold

Ghrita is the primal seed of the cosmos, the principle which quickens its embryo, laid into it by the Self Existent Creator (*Svayambhū Prajāpati*) It is Prajāpati Agni personified, spoken of as a four-horned Bull (*chatuḥśringa gaura*, Rv IX. 58 2). The four horns are the four forms of Agni, viz the one transcendent or absolute, *ab intra*, and the three which become manifest as the three Fires in the sacrifice, explained above, which symbolise the principle of Trinity in cosmic creation. Rigveda IV 58 1-11 is a glorification of this mighty principle of universal fecundation, termed severally as Agni, Sūrya, Āpah, Gāvah and Ghrita, who are all remembered as the Devatās of the hymn The universe depends upon the power and might within the sea, within the heart, within all life

May we attain that sweetly-flavoured wave of thine, brought at this gathering "over the surface of the floods" (Rv IV 58 11)

The flowing of the ceaseless streams of *Ghrita*, pure and full of sweetness (*madhu* or *soma*) is the creative process of cosmic and individuated life (Rv IV 58. 10) That eternal power was produced from the sacrifice of Prajāpati in which the Universe was the offering (*sarvahuta Yajña*), and the *Ghrita* the complete form of Yajña itself, its esoteric name (Rv IV 58 2) This Agni is the primal Bull (*vrishabha*), the universal sprinkler, the immortal principle that has entered the mortals (*maho devo martyān āviveśa*, Rv IV 58 3) expressed as both Life and Mind In each womb the generative principle is first concealed with its quality of Mind,

Life & Matter (*Manas, Prāna, Vāk*) It is, so to say, the hoarded stock of the Panis, which the Devas discover and make manifest India obtains one share, viz. Mind or *Manas*, since Indra is spoken of as *manasvān* (Rv II 12 1) Sūrya produces or makes manifest its second one third share, viz the principle of *Prāna* or Life (also called *Akshara*) These two remain invisible and by their inherent powers produce the *Vena*, the beautiful flowering principle which sharply distinguishes the male and the female and then by the law of depositing the male germ into the womb of the female (i. e the Svadhā principle of the two *Pitris*) continues the process of life in the form of the fruit or its germ the seed Life starts from the seed and completes its circle in the seed, which releases a fresh chain-action The seed or germ is *Ghrita* and Agni. The sacrifice or Agni's *Yajña* begins with the laying of the seed and the quickening of the foetus thereby, and through a very complex process of changes and differentiation wrought by the phases of time unfolding itself as the *ahorātra, darśa paurnamāsa, chāturmāsya, ayana* and *samvatsara*, the seed is again reproduced as the seed It is conceived of as one unified Yajña through a succession of intermediary yajñas as enmerated above Each creative process unfolding itself in time and gradually finding its completion or fulfilment so as to be merged in the next one is a *yajña* Day and night (*Ahorātra Agnihotra*), the two halves of the month (*Darśa-Paurṇamāsa*), the three seasons (Spring, Summer and Autumn, the *Chāturmāsya* or Four monthly sacrifices), the two semesters (*Ayaneshtis*) and the year (*Samvatsara yajña*) are the units of time, amongst which the *Samvatsara* offers the complete example of the revolving wheel of time. In each *yajña* or creative process, there is a *paśu* tied to its stake, viz the organism that is being produced, the "child" or *prajā*, the manifest form of Life and Mind through Matter.

This is the *Paśubandha* sacrifice which takes one year and of which *Purushamedha, Aśvamedha* and *Gomedha* are the three principal forms corresponding to *Manas, Prāna* and *Vāk* respectively. The year *Samvatsara* in each creative process is a relative term signifying the variant periods of time from a second to an aeon in which the *yajñas* are completed The building of the complete fire-altar, i e the complete manifestation of life in the form of a living tree, animal or man is an integrated process, elaborated as the ritual of the *Agni-Chayana* comprising the building of five altars (*pañchachitika yajña*) corresponding to the five elements of the five Prānas, which together make one "Golden Reed" (*hiranyaya vetasa*, Rv. IV, 58. 5), viz the body that takes form and becomes manifest from the streams of *Ghrita* or seed poured into the womb The embryo (*garbha*) is the five-jointed Golden Reed and its complete development gives birth to the Babe (*Kumāra*) who is called *Chitra Śiśu* (Rv. X 1 2) which means both the *Chitya Agni* (the fire generated through successive altars) and the miraculous Child i. e. Agni

called *Adbhuta* (Rv. VI 15. 2, Āraṇyakaparvan 213 2, Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 94. 7). This leads us to the very important topic of Kumāra Agni who is the son of Rudra, or a manifestation of Agni as Rudra, described at length in the Śatapatha Br. VI. 1 3 1-20 (*chitasya nāma karoti. chitranāmānam karoti chitrosīti sarvāṇi hi chitrāny-agniḥ*) : 'to him (Agni) when built up (*chita*) he gives a name He calls him by the name of *Chitra* (the Built-up one, the Miraculous one), saying, "Thou art *Chitra*"; for Agni is all the built-up things'. The meaning of this is not difficult to seek Wherever we have a living organic substance it is the result of Agni become manifest through the gross material elements, which therefore is called *chita*, i e grown or developed through the Yajña, and hence the same born as *Chitra* or the Miraculous Boy, the Wonderful Hero (*Adbhuta Kumāra*, cf. *mahādbhuta*, Āranya-kaparvan 212 5)

This Miraculous Boy is the Fire of Life that at first sleeps in the seed and then wakes up by a quickening process that is common to the plant, animal and human kingdoms. The awakened nucleus is thrown into rhythmic vibration, a throbbing pulsation, a process of expansion and contraction (called *samañchana-prasārana*, Śatapatha VIII I 4 10). The source of this tremor in the individuated centres of living organisms is the same as the cosmic pulsation in the Sun. Both are manifesting the quiverings of a single Fire or Energy, and both represent the birth of an identical divine Child called Agni, Vāmadeva, Manu, Skanda and by many other names.

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3. HIRAṆYAGARBHA [हिरण्यगर्भ]

1. सलिलम्

The wide conception of Vedic cosmogony is epitomised in the word हिरण्यगर्भ—the Golden Germ. The Purāṇas elaborate the theme and explain its meaning as part of the एकार्णवविधि, i e the existence of One Ocean in the beginning of the cosmos The Rigveda refers to the Primeval Waters as सलिलं—

तम आसीत्तमसा गूह्ळमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् । (नासदीय सूक्त १०।१२९।३)

'The Unmanifest (तम.) concealed within it the Formless Manifestation (तम') ।

The Universe (इदं सर्वम्) then was indiscriminated (अप्रकेत) in the Primeval Waters (सलिलम्).'

The same Ocean is referred to as the Waters of unfathomed depth :

अम्भ किमासीद् गहनं गभीरम् । (नासदीय, X. 129 1)

Verily the cosmos is the outcome of the fashioning of forms from out of the Waters of the primeval Ocean of Energy

गौरीर्मिमाय सलिलानि तक्षती । (ऋ० १।१६४।४१)

'The Dark She-Bison has by her rumblings fashioned the Waters into manifold forms.'

What is the significance of Gaurī ? In Vedic symbolism गौरी and गौ are distinguished , गौरी, the she-buffalo, represents the वाक् of the dark regions of वरुण, and गौ, as the cow of the effulgent regions of इन्द्र. Thus गौरी and गौ both are forms of Agni, or Vāk, for all Speech or Sound is pulsating energy.

The creative process is the descending of the water-floods from those Primeval Oceans :

तस्याः समुद्रा अधि विक्षरन्ति । (ऋ० १।१६४।४२)

The Oceans remain under the lordship of Varuna, they are encompassed by his sovereign might Vṛitra is Varuna's arch agent, the enveloping Asura who is lying asleep at every point of the Ocean Indra emerges as the great God to challenge him, to overcome him and release the flow of Waters Indra is the principle of हिरण्यगर्भ, the same as अग्नि, the child of Waters (अपां गर्भः), or the gold-pinioned Bird (हिरण्यपक्ष शकुनि), i.e. the Sun :

यद्देवा यतयो यथा भुवनान्यपिन्वत । अत्रा समुद्र आ गूह्ळ सूर्यमजभर्तन ।। (ऋ० १०।७२।०)

'The Sun which was lying hidden in the Ocean, Ye brought forward, O Ye Gods, when, like Yatis, with your regulated dance movements, you caused the worlds to grow'

These most appropriate words—समुद्र आगूह्ळ सूर्यम्—are the Vedic nucleus of the हिरण्यगर्भ विद्या—

हिरण्यगर्भ. समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् । स दाधार पृथिवीमुत द्या कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ।
(ऋ० १०।१२१।१)

First of all to come into being is Hiranyagarbha, the supreme principle of creation;—He supports द्यावापृथिवी as the manifest form of the Unmanifest प्रजापति who is symbolised as क, and whose unknowable form is the ultimate object of our oblations In a clearly worded stanza of the Prajāpati Sūkta, we find a fourfold statement.

आपो ह यद्बृहतीर्विश्वमायन् गर्भं दधाना जनयन्तीरग्निम् । ततो देवाना समवर्ततासुरेकः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ।।
(ऋ० १०।१२१।७)

(1) बृहतीः आपः—The Great Waters, same as the समुद्र, आप:, or Purānic अप एव ससर्जादौ or आपो नारा. ।

(2) विश्वं गर्भं दधाना—The Universe was its germ, womb or child:

अग्निर्हि न: प्रथमजा ऋतस्य । (ऋ० १०।५।७)
अपा सखा प्रथमजा ऋतावा क्वस्विज्जात कुत आबभूव ।। (ऋ० १०।१६८।३)

(3) जनयन्तीरग्निम्—That Germ was Agni, the Child of Waters, and Sūrya or Indra is but a form of that Agni अग्नि is the first-born of ऋत or बृहती: आपः.

(4) देवानाम् असु.—The अग्नि thus produced as the womb of waters is the unique spirit (असु = प्राणः) of all the Gods (अग्नि = प्राण = समञ्चन-प्रसारण, Cosmic Pulsation). He is the Hiranyagarbha, same as the सत्यनारायण सूर्य of the Purānas, and the सत्यधर्मा of the Rigveda (X 121. 9).

The हिरण्यगर्भ is the emergence of सत्य against the substratum of ऋत, or the Infinite Universal, called Parameshthi (ऋतमेव परमेष्ठि). The Vedic-cum-Purānic formula is :—

सत्य = हिरण्य = प्राण = अग्नि = सूर्य = नारायण

2. एकार्णवविधि

In Purānic terminology, the expanded Ocean at the time of dissolution is called सलिल (हरिवंश ३।१०।१), महार्णव, एकार्णव, अगाध स्तब्ध सलिल (हरिवंश ३।१०।३४) or युगान्त तोय

(भागवत ३।८।२३). The Harivamśa goes a step further and describes the primeval watery floods as enveloped by a nebulous frost

यथा चैकार्णवजले नीहारेण वृतान्तरे । अव्यक्तभीषणे लोके सर्वभूतविवर्जिते ॥
(हरि० ३।१०।३१)

In its unmanifest form, when all sentient beings are nonexistent, and everything is covered by darkness, the single Ocean looks formidable All the divided units of creation are disrupted and drawn together into a single watery mass :

भूत्वा नारायणो योगी सप्तमूर्तिर्विभावसु । गभस्तिभि. प्रदीप्ताभि संशोषयति सागरान् ॥१॥
पीत्वाऽर्णवांश्च सर्वान् सनदी. कूपांश्च सर्वश । पर्वतानां च सलिलं सर्वं पीत्वा च रश्मिभिः ॥२॥
भित्त्वा सहस्रशश्चैव मही नीत्वा रसातलम् ।
रसातलजलं कृत्स्नं पिबते रसमुत्तमम् ॥ ३
अप्सु सृजन् क्लेदमन्यद्ददाति प्राणिना ध्रुवम् ॥ ४ (हरि० ३।६)

Nilakantha translates अप्सु as कारण ब्रह्मणि, the transcendent Brahman as the ultimate cause of the created worlds

As a matter of fact आपः is equivalent to all the possibilities of Existence, which are withdrawn into their primal source when dissolution takes place.

In terms of modern psychology this state may be compared to the *humidum radicle*, the root-moisture, the spirit of life, not only indwelling in all living beings, but immanent in everything that exists.

This Flood of Life breaks up its individuation and is withdrawn into its universal source, the Ocean

समुद्रं व. प्रहिणोमि स्वा योनिमपीतना । (अथर्व १०।५।२३)

The watery floods of this Ocean enshrine within their womb what is variously known as अपां वत्स, अपां वृषभ, अपां हिरण्यगर्भ, दिव्य अश्मा पृश्नि, अग्नि and the याजुष पुरुष, symbolising the conjoint principle of movement and stasis (गति-स्थिति) (Atharvaveda, X 5 15-21).

3. निद्रागतनारायण

The most characteristic divine feature associated with the oceanic equilibrium of Energy is the conception of नारायण

एकार्णवे तु त्रैलोक्ये ब्रह्मा नारायणात्मक. ।
भोगिशय्यागत. शेते त्रैलोक्यग्रासबृंहित. ॥ (विष्णु० १।३।२४)

Brahmā and Nārāyana are identical divinities, who, having withdrawn the three worlds into their person, sleep on the cosmic serpent called Ananta Śesha, [See also, Vishṇu, 1. 3. 3, 1. 4 1, 1 4. 4-5 for ब्रह्मा=नारायण]

The principle of sleep (निन्द्रा) is the same as the principle of Rest or Stasis (स्थिति) नारायण is the same as स्थाणु, the fixed eternal, changeless Divinity, called एकम् (the One without a second), अज (Unborn), अव्यक्त, पुरुष, अनादि काल, कारण, केवल, नित्य, सदसदात्मक, etc These epithets are often repeated in the Purānas with many additional ones [1] Some of these correspond to those used in the नासदीयसूक्त —

नाहो न रात्रिर्न नभो न भूमिर्नासीत् तमो ज्योतिरभून्न चान्यत् ।
श्रोत्रादिबुद्धयानुपलभ्यमेकं प्राधानिक ब्रह्म पुमास्तदासीत् ।। (विष्णु० १।२।२३)

The author of the Vishnu Purāṇa explicitly mentions this doctrine to have been developed by the Brahmavādins of the Vedas (वेदवादविदो विद्वन्नियता ब्रह्मवादिन. । पठन्ति चैतमेवार्थम् '१।२।२२).

नारायण denotes the Transcendental Divine Power as the substratum of Infinite Nature (प्रधान) The Maitrāyanī Upanishad explains Nārāyana in a grand equation as follows

एष हि खल्वात्मेशान: शंभुर्भवो रुद्र प्रजापतिर्विश्वसृग्घिरण्यगर्भ. । सत्यं प्राणो हंस शास्ता विष्णुर्नारायणोऽर्कः सविता धाता विधाता सम्राडिन्द्र इन्दुरिति । (मैत्रा० ६।८)

शेष and विष्णु are correlative terms वेवेष्टि व्याप्नोति इति विष्णुः,—Vishnu is that aspect of the Divine Power which is comprehended in the created cosmos and thus made finite That which remains beyond is truly called शेष—The Remainder Vishnu is relative and Śesha is absolute , Vishnu is finite and Śesha is infinite The relationship between the relative and the absolute aspects of Divinity is expressed as 'Vishṇu resting or sleeping on Śesha, the Ananta or Infinite One.' It is a cogent and complete iconographic formula, viz that of शेषशायी विष्णु.

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[1] परः पराणा परम. परमात्मा पितामह्. । रूपवर्णादिरहितो विशेषणविवर्जित. ।। १ ।।
अपक्षयविनाशाभ्या परिणामर्धिजन्मभि । गुणैर्विवर्जित सर्वै स भातीति हि केवलम् ।। २ ।।
सर्वत्रासौ समश्चापि वसन्ननुपमो मत. । भावयन् ब्रह्मरूपेण विद्वद्भि परिपठ्यते ।। ३ ।।
तद्ब्रह्म परमं नित्यमजमक्षयमव्ययम् । एकस्वरूपं च सदा हेयाभावाच्च निर्मलम् ।। ३¹ ।।
तदेतत् सर्वमेवैतद् व्यक्ताव्यक्तस्वरूपवत् । तथा पुरुषरूपेण कालरूपेण च स्थितम् ।।
परस्य ब्रह्मणो रूपं पुरुष. प्रथमो द्विज । व्यक्ताव्यक्ते तथैवान्ये रूपे कालस्तथापरम् ।। ४¹ ।।
प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तकालाना परम हि यत् । पश्यन्ति सूरयः शुद्धं तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ।। ४² ।।
प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तकालास्तु प्रविभागश । रूपाणि स्थितिसर्गान्तव्यक्तिसद्भावहेतव. ।। ४³ ।।
व्यक्तं विष्णुस्तथाव्यक्तं पुरुष. काल एव च । क्रीडतो बालकस्येव चेष्टा तस्य निशामय ।। ४⁴ ।।

W. Kirfel, *Das Purāna Pañcalakṣana*, p 6

4. स्वयम्भू प्रजापति

We may briefly explain here the cosmogonic doctrine given in the beginning of the Manu Smṛiti

आसीदिदं तमोभूतमप्रज्ञातमलक्षणम् । अप्रतर्क्यमविज्ञेयं प्रसुप्तमिव सर्वत. ॥
ततः स्वयंभूर्भगवानव्यक्तो व्यञ्जयन्निदम् । महाभूतादि वृत्तौजा. प्रादुरासीत्तमोनुद ॥
योऽसावतीन्द्रियग्राह्य. सूक्ष्मोऽव्यक्तः सनातनः । सर्वभूतमयोऽचिन्त्य. स एव स्वयमुद्बभौ ॥

The unmanifest (अव्यक्त) is described as तमोभूत (enveloped in darkness, cf. तम आसीत्तमसागूढमग्रे, Rigveda 10 129 3), अप्रज्ञात-अलक्षण-अप्रतर्क्य, unknown and unknowable (cf अप्रकेतं of the Rigveda, 10 159 3), प्रसुप्तमिव सर्वत, which has reference to the Purāṇic imagery of Vishnu sleeping on शेष He is also spoken of as the subtle, eternal, unmanifest principle, the cause of the gross material elements, and itself beyond the ken of the senses Such a divinity is called Svayambhū, the self-existent. He is essentially self centred, वृत्तौजाः, i e whose ओजस् or power is originally introverted on himself, but which he releases for the sake of manifestation (व्यञ्जयन्निदम्). Then primeval darkness is dispelled (तमोनुद.) and the imprisoned forces become operative or extrovertly directed (प्रादुरासीत्).

He who is स्वयम्भू creates out of his own body by the power of meditation or तपस्, the succeeding principle called परमेष्ठी, or आपः, the universal mother in whose womb the seed of creation is deposited

Of this pair स्वयम्भू is the Fiery principle, the Father, that deposits the seed; and परमेष्ठी is the Watery principle, the Mother, that receives the seed of the cosmos in its womb

सोऽभिध्याय शरीरात्स्वात्सिसृक्षुर्विविधा. प्रजा । अप एव ससर्जादौ तासु बीजमवासृजत् ॥ (मनु० १।८)

बीज is the same as भुवनस्य रेत of the Rigveda, आप. is the same as विराज्, or महत्, or आण्ड, the egg

When the creative seed has been received within it, the cosmic egg becomes the Golden Germ (हिरण्यगर्भ), the same as हैम अण्ड or Golden Egg The creative seed of स्वयम्भू प्रजापति is called हिरण्य, 'Gold', which is the symbol of Fire (अग्नि), or सूर्य, or प्राण, or the eternally energised force of cosmic pulsation (समञ्चन-प्रसारणम्), an unending rhythm of expansion and contraction that is called काल (Time) or संवत्सर.

Manu uses the three terms नर, नार and नारायण, which should be clearly distinguished स्वयम्भू प्रजापति is नर, परमेष्ठी प्रजापति is नार and हिरण्यगर्भ प्रजापति is नारायण. When he speaks of सर्वलोकपितामह, he refers to स्वयम्भू and there is a reason behind it,

In the शतपथब्राह्मण, creation is described as the कामप्र यज्ञ of प्रजापति—

ता वा एता पंचदेवता एतेन कामप्रेण यज्ञेनायजन्त

(शतपथ ११।१।६।१।२०)

The Five Deities mentioned here are named as :

१ स्वयम्भू प्रजापति
२ परमेष्ठी
३. सूर्य (= इन्द्र)
४. अग्नि
५. सोम

Amongst them परमेष्ठी (the universal principle which is fecundated) is called प्राजापत्य, son of स्वयम्भू प्रजापति. स्वयम्भू is the father of परमेष्ठी—

स परमेष्ठी प्रजापतिं पितरमब्रवीत् कामप्रं वाऽअहं यज्ञमदर्शम्, तेन त्वायाजयानीति

(शतपथ ११।१।६।१७)

परमेष्ठी discovered the कामप्र यज्ञ (the creative process by which the universe is brought into existence as fulfilling the काम of the Creator). On the one hand he associated the self-existent स्वयम्भू, his Father, and on the other इन्द्र his son This इन्द्र is सूर्य, हिरण्याण्ड, and हिरण्यगर्भ, typifying the Twin Pair of अग्नीषोम The latter are called the Two Brothers (स इन्द्रोऽग्नीषोमौ भ्रातरावब्रवीत् । अनेन वा कामप्रेण यज्ञेन याजयानि, येन मामिदं पिता प्रजापतिरयीयजदिति, श० ११।१।६।१९). The Twin Brothers अग्नि and सोम fulfil this creative process by अग्नि playing the role of अन्नाद and by सोम that of अन्न. The eater of food and food refer to the process of assimilation and elimination, or the function of the वैश्वानर Fire in each individual centre of Life or Prāna The grand कामप्र sacrifice of the Creator is his manifestation as प्राण in each and every centre .

स इष्ट्वाकामयताहमेवेदं सर्वं स्यामिति । स प्राणोऽभवत् प्राणो वाऽइदं सर्वम् अयं वै प्राणो योऽयं पवते ।

(शत० ११।१।६।१७)

'Having performed the कामप्र sacrifice, he desired—'may I become This All (i e the universe)' He then became प्राण, for प्राण is this All. This Vāyu (as the symbol of movement) is प्राण.'

प्राण or Life is the principle of cosmic pulsation, the rhythm that is the soul and essence of हिरण्यगर्भ, manifesting within its centre as अग्नि and सोम, as the positive and negative, or the male and female aspects of energy. The Atharva refers to these as the two Fires, one cold (हिम) and the other hot (घ्रंस, अथर्व १३।१।४६, तत्रैतावग्नी आधत्त हिमं घ्रंसं च रोहितः). यज्ञ is a creative process being the outcome of the mingling of hot and cold :

स्वर्विदो रोहितस्य ब्रह्मणाग्नि. समिध्यते । तस्माद् घ्रंसस्तस्माद्धिमस्तस्माद्यज्ञोऽजायत ॥

The रोहित or the Ruddy is अक्षर, i e अग्नि or हिरण्यगर्भ, the Golden Egg quickened with Life, invested with the Twin Fires of heat and cold.

5 क्षोभ

The Purānas refer to the principle of क्षोभ, 'agitation,' 'movement', as an essential step to creation It signifies the awakening of Vishnu from sleep It is variously described as गुणवैषम्य, परिस्फुरण, विस्पन्दन, जागरण, क्षोभण, संरम्भ, etc

The Linga Purāna explains it as follows —

साधर्म्येणावतिष्ठेते प्रधानपुरुषावुभौ । तम· सत्त्वरजोपेतौ समत्वेन व्यवस्थितौ ॥७२॥
अनुद्रिक्तावभूता तावोतप्रोतौ परस्परम् । गुणसाम्यो लयो ज्ञेयो वैषम्ये सृष्टिरुच्यते ॥७३॥
उषास्य रजनी कृत्स्ना परा माहेश्वरी तथा । अहर्मुखे प्रवृत्तश्च पर प्रकृतिसम्भव ॥७५॥
क्षोभयामास योगेन परेण परमेश्वर ॥७६॥ (लिग पुराण १।७०)

The Supreme Lord by his Yogic power agitated both प्रकृति and पुरुष to emerge from the state of गुणसाम्य to गुणवैषम्य and thereby start the creative process Maheśvara created the trinitarian principle of the three Gods, the three Gunas, the three Fires and the three Worlds

महेश्वरात् त्रयो देवा जज्ञिरे जगदीश्वरात् । शाश्वता परमा गुह्याः सर्वात्मान शरीरिण ॥ ७७
एत एव त्रयो देवा एत एव त्रयो गुणा । एत एव त्रयो लोका एत एव त्रयोऽग्नय ॥ ७८ (लिग० १।७०)

According to the देवीभागवत when योगनिद्रा entered the body of विष्णु, he was rendered अचेतन and शब्दवर्जित (देवी० १।१।७।१८). By the miraculous power of वाक् which is fiery energy, तामसी निद्रा was ejected out of Vishnu's body and He was roused to activity

एवं स्तुता तदा देवी तामसी तत्र वेधसा । निःसृत्य हरिदेहात्तु संस्थिता पार्श्वतस्तदा ।
विस्पन्दितशरीरोऽसौ यदा जातो जनार्दन । धाता परमिका प्राप्तो मुदं दृष्ट्वा हरिं तत ॥ (देवी० १।७।४८,५०)
एका मूर्तिस्त्रयो देवा ब्रह्माविष्णुमहेश्वरा. । रज.सत्त्वतमोभिश्च संयुताः कार्यकारका ॥

In the cosmic egg (ब्रह्माण्ड) there is nothing higher than the principle of the Triple Gunas or the Three Gods, which is the effective cause of all activity—

The agitated त्रैगुण्य belongs to प्रकृति—

प्रकृति क्षोभमापन्ना पुरुषाख्ये जगद्गुरौ । महान् प्रादुरभूद् बुद्धिस्ततोऽहं समवर्तत ॥
अहंकाराच्च सूक्ष्माणि तन्मात्राणीन्द्रियाणि च । (बृहन्नारदीय० ३।३१-३२)

The great पुरुष, either as स्थाणु महेश्वर, or as निद्रागत विष्णु represents the principle of स्थिति, immovable being, symbolising resistance to all motion, whereas प्रकृति is the excited condition of movement—

स एव क्षोभक पूर्वं स क्षोभ्य प्रकृते पति. । स संकोचविकाशाभ्या प्रधानत्वेऽपि च स्थित. ।। १२
उत्पन्नः स जगद्योनिरगुणोऽपि रजोगुणम् । भुञ्जन् प्रवर्तते सर्गे ब्रह्मत्व' समुपाश्रित. ।। १३
रजो ब्रह्मा तमो रुद्रो विष्णु सत्त्वं जगत्पति । एत एव त्रयो देवा एत एव त्रयो गुणा. ।। १८ ।।
(मार्कण्डेय० अ० ४६)

शिवेच्छया परा शक्ति. शिवतत्त्वैकता गता । तत परिस्फुरत्यादौ सर्गे तैलं तिलादिव ।। १८
तस्या विक्षोभ्यमाणायामादौ नाद समुद्बभौ ।। १९ (शिव०, वायवीयसंहिता, २।४)

The principle of क्षोभ is the same as रजस्, अक्षर, अमृत, शक्ति, क्रिया, काल, etc. All these variant terms are used in the Purāṇas [1] We may go back to the Asyavāmīya Sūkta of the Rigveda where the releasing of the waters of the Ocean is called अधिविक्षरण (RV. 1 164 42), kindred to the Purānic परिस्फुरण, विस्पन्दन etc

The account in the Harivamśa brings in Vasishtha as the Rishi 'born from the jar (कुम्भसंभव.) who performed तपस् and created the worlds From his abode in the midst of the Ocean he slightly agitated its waters, and this initial trembling gradually increased so that by its mounting momentum it threw the whole sea into churning convulsions and dimensional waves from whose friction the fire called Vaiśvānara was produced [2]

According to the Brāhmanas, वसिष्ठ is the designation of प्रजापति, अग्नि and प्राण [3]

१. सैका परा च चिद्रूपा शक्ति. प्रसवधर्मिणी । विभज्य बहुधा विश्व विदधाति शिवेच्छया ।। १५ ।।
एकधा च द्विधा चैव तथा शतसहस्रधा । शक्तय. खलु भिद्यन्ते बहुधा व्यवहारत ।। १७ ।।
(शिव पु०, वायवीय सं०, २।४)
स्त्रीपुंसप्रभवं विश्व स्त्रीपुंसात्मकमेव च । (शिव०, वाय० सं०, २।४।३७)
ईशो वृक्ष इव स्तब्धो य एको दिवि तिष्ठति । येनेदमखिलं पूर्णं पुरुषेण महात्मना ।। ६ ।।
एको बहूना जन्तूना निष्क्रियाणा च सक्रिय' । य एको बहुधा बीजं करोति स महेश्वर ।। ७ ।।
इदिद क्षरमव्यक्त यदप्यमृतमक्षरम् । तावुभाक्षरात्मानावेको देव स्वयं हर ।। १२ ।।
अयं मुक्तो मोचकश्च ह्यकाल कालचोदक ।। १७ ।। (शिव०, वाय० २।४)

१. आपव स विभुर्भूत्वा कारयामास वे तप. । छादयित्वाऽऽत्मनो देहमात्मना कुम्भसंभव. ।। १ ।।
ततो महात्माऽतिबलो मति लोकस्य सर्जने । महता पञ्चभूताना विश्वभूतो व्यचिन्तयत् ।। २ ।।
तस्य चिन्तयतस्तत्र तपसा भावितात्मन । निराकाशे तोयमये सूक्ष्मे जगति गह्वरे ।। ३ ।।
ईषत्संक्षोभयामास सोऽर्णव सलिले स्थित । सोऽनन्तरोर्मिणा सूक्ष्ममथ च्छिद्रमभूत्तदा ।। ४ ।।
तत्र शब्दगतिर्भूत्वा मारुतद्रवसंभव । स लब्ध्वाऽऽन्तरमक्षोभ्यो व्यवर्धत समीरण ।। ५ ।।
विवर्धता बलवता तेन सक्षोभितोऽर्णव । अन्योन्यवेगाभिहता ममन्थुश्चोर्मयो भृशम् ।। ६ ।।
महार्णवस्य क्षुब्धस्य तस्मिन्नम्भसि मथ्यति । कृष्णवर्त्मा समभवत्प्रभुर्वैश्वानरोऽर्चिमान् ।। ७ ।। (हरिवंश० ३।११)

२. प्रजापतिर्वै वसिष्ठ., कौषीतकी ब्रा० २५।२
अग्निर्वै देवाना वसिष्ठ', शत० १४।९।२।१४
प्राणो वै वसिष्ठ ऋषि., शत० ८।१।१६

The Vasus are प्राण and वसिष्ठ is therefore the foremost प्राण, viz the मध्यप्राण, which begins the process of life and is called इन्ध, and esoterically इन्द्र. He is the enkindled flame of life in each Jar, i e in the conjoint form of each द्यावापृथिवी unit In the शान्तिपर्वन् (३२६।२०) वसिष्ठ is called हैरण्यगर्भ, the son of हिरण्यगर्भ प्रजापति

6. आपो नारा:

With reference to the एकार्णव विधि, the Puranas frequently cite the following verse of the Manu Smriti, either as it is or with variants

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः । ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायण· स्मृत. ॥
(मनु० १।१० ; ब्रह्म पु० ५६।१२, ६०।२५ ; वायु ५।३८)

The शान्तिपर्वन् has it as follows

नराणामयनं ख्यातमहमेक सनातन ।
आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वे नरसूनव । अयनं मम तत्पूर्वमतो नारायणो ह्यहम् ॥

Also उद्योगपर्व ६८।१०—

नराणामयनाच्चापि तेन नारायणः स्मृत. ।

This was an ancient गाथा of which the मानव version is the oldest form preserved Later it became the creed of the भागवतs in variant forms The doctrine formed part of the Vedic cosmogony according to which Waters existed in the beginning (आपो ह वाऽइदमग्रे सलिलमेवास, श० ११।१।६।१), and they gave birth to Agni which is अपां गर्भः, or अपां वत्स Agni is verily हिरण्यगर्भ, सत्य, नारायण, सूर्य, प्राण.

7. अण्ड

अग्नि meditated upon आप, united with it and produced the principle of हिरण्य, i e. pulsating life or the impregnated Egg हिरण्य is the seed of Agni (अग्ने रेतो हिरण्यम्, श० २।२।३।२८).

अण्ड or Egg is an important symbol in the generative process of life. अण्ड is the same as विराज् (यस्मादण्डं विराड् जज्ञे भूतेन्द्रियगुणात्मक, भाग० २।६।२ ; also २।५।३४-३५). Viraj is the mother principle, सोम or आप, or परमेष्ठी—

यस्मिन् विराट् परमेष्ठी प्रजापतिरग्निर्वैश्वानर. सह पंक्तया श्रित· । य: परस्य प्राणं परमस्य तेज आददे ॥
(अथर्व १३।३।५)

As प्राण enkindles the *ādhyātmika* centre and the Sun heats the *adhidaivata* or cosmos, so does the indwelling Purusha heat the Viraj both from inside and outside (स्वधिष्ण्यं प्रतपन् प्राणो बहिश्च प्रतपत्यसौ । ऐव विराजं प्रतपंस्तपत्यन्तर्बहि· पुमान् ॥ भाग० २।६।१६).

There are two categories, the first is called विराट् or परमेष्ठी, and the second अग्नि वैश्वानर or प्राण. This refers to the two stages of the egg, viz the ovum in the mother and its quickening by the seed of the father after which it becomes the fertilised egg

In the दाक्षायणी सूक्त of the ऋग्वेद, the two stages of the Egg are clearly distinguished Aditi, the Infinite Mother gave birth to eight sons who sprang to life from her body With seven she went to meet the Gods, and the eighth was Mārtāṇḍa which she cast away (परा मार्तण्डमास्यत्, ऋ० १०।७२।८). The Seven Gods constitute together the active energising principles of Life, Mind and Matter as the Seven Prāṇas or the Seven Vasus The eighth मार्तण्ड is dormant, when thrown outside the bounds of Time (काल, संवत्सर) When Aditi unites मार्तण्ड with the cycle of birth and death (प्रजायै मृत्यवे त्वत्), which is the same as the wheel of Time (संवत्सर चक्र), the cast away मार्तण्ड is revivified as the yonder Sun or Hiranyagarbha The fecundating principle of विराज् is काल, the universal propeller (चोदक), that imparts movement or rhythmic pulsation to all centres of manifest life काल is नारायण पुरुष, विष्णु who enters all beings as the Thread Spirit and quickens them In the Bhāgavata, the dormant egg is called अजीव and the active one जीव (वर्षपूग सहस्राते तदण्डमुदकेशयम् । कालकर्मस्वभावस्थो जीवोऽजीवमजीवयत् । २।६।३४) विष्णु when he awakens from sleep accepts three principles of काल, कर्म and स्वभाव with which he quickens the active egg

As in the Śatapatha · Verily in the beginning this (universe) was water (आपः), nothing but a sea of excited water (सलिल). The waters (as the all-pervasive mother) desired, 'How can we be progenited ?' They toiled and performed *tapas* When they were becoming heated, a golden egg was produced (हिरण्मयम् आण्डम् संबभूव). The year (संवत्सर), indeed, was not then in existence : this golden egg floated about for as long as the space of a year In a year's time पुरुष was produced therefrom . he is प्रजापति.' (Śatapatha, 11 1 6 1-2)

In manifestation प्रजापति becomes twofold, viz यज्ञ and संवत्सर The यज्ञ form is विराज् or the egg, and संवत्सर the unit of time for the maturity of that egg When the Creator has completed the span of one year, or the single revolving unit of time, He potentially becomes सहस्रायु, i e destined to live a thousand years or up to the end of creation

प्रजापति completed the span of a year, he stood up and broke open the golden egg ·

संवत्सरे हि प्रजापतिरजायत । स इदं हिरण्मयमाण्डं व्यरुजत् । (शत० ११।१।६।२)

When the egg broke, the three worlds, द्यौ. पृथिवी अन्तरिक्षं, which constitute the space of each individuating centre, were produced from it

तस्मिन्नंडे स भगवानुषित्वा परिवत्सरम् । स्वयमेवात्मनो घ्यानात्तदण्डमकरोद्द्विधा ।
ताभ्या स शकलाभ्या च दिवं भूमि च निर्ममे । मध्ये व्योम दिशश्चाष्टावपा स्थानं च शाश्वतम् ॥
(मनु १।१२।१३)

The principle of संवत्सर is equivalent to the two integreated units of expansion and contraction (संकोच-विकास, विष्णु० १।२।३१), the two wings of the golden Bird of Time (हिरण्यपक्ष शकुनि) who flaps his pinions for a thousand years

य. सहस्रसवे सत्रे जज्ञे विश्वसृजामृषि. । हिरण्यवर्ण शकुनिस्तस्मै हंसात्मने नमः ॥ (शान्तिपर्व, ४७।२६)

He is the golden goose destined to be on wings in a flight to heaven for *a thousand days' duration*

सहस्राह्ण्य वियतावस्य पक्षौ हरेर्हंसस्य पततः स्वर्गम् । (अथर्व १३।३।१४)

Gold (हिरण्य) is a favourite epithet in Vedic symbolism Vrātya Prajāpati, intent on creating life, has a vision of gold within himself and then he engenders :

स प्रजापति. स्वर्णमात्मन्नपश्यत्तत्प्राजनयत् । (अथर्व १५।१।२)

सुवर्ण or हिरण्य is the seed (रेत.) which is the universal cause of generation, and is the same as प्राण.

The significance of 'Golden Egg' floating in the waters for a year was thus well understood in Vedic and Purānic cosmogony Its name as प्रजापति or नारायण विष्णु made no change in the basic idea It is the active centre of सत्य in the watery ocean of ऋत, or आप. ऋत points to the all pervasive primordial matter, defined as यदाप्नोत् तस्मादाप. (श० ६।१।१।६ , अद्भिर्वाऽइदं सर्वमाप्तम् , श० १।१।१।१४, same as एकार्णव 'the One Ocean')

हिरण्यगर्भ is the unit of life, the egg, that has the indwelling spirit within it, that is destined, because of the power of life, to be born and to die again (प्रजायै मृत्यवे त्वत्). The अण्ड is defined as the विराज् with ब्रह्मा entering it and being born again as अधिपुरुष (cf भाग० ३।६।४) The latter is the same as वैराज मनु, i e Manu or Mind as the offspring of विराज्, the same as विवस्वान् The Sun is verily the object of these symbols ·

हिरण्यवर्णं यं गर्भमदितिर्दैत्यनाशनम् । एकं द्वादशधा जज्ञे तस्मै सूर्यात्मने नमः । (शान्तिपर्व, ४७।२३)

हिरण्यगर्भ is सूर्य, the womb of the great Mother Goddess Aditi He is the रोहित, the Red One (अथर्व० १३।१।१), concealed within the Ocean (यो अप्स्वन्तः) and now thrown up by the concentrated force of the universal creative laws, as the most perfect visible symbol in the whole of the creation. Homage is paid to him under

many names: रुद्र, महादेव, अर्यमा, वरुण, अग्नि, सूर्य, महायम (अथर्व० १३।४।४-५). He represents the ten calves with a single head (तं वत्सा उपतिष्ठन्त्येकशीर्षाणो युता दश, अथर्व० १३।४।६), i. e the perfect symbol of विराज् which has ten constituent elements. As इन्द्र he shines in the centre of the heavens—

स इन्द्रो भूत्वा तपति मध्यतो दिवम् । (अथर्व० १३।३।१३)

He is सविता, also called महेन्द्र, the mighty Indra (अथर्व० १३।४।१-२).

It may be mentioned that the Purānas define the Egg as consisting of seven constituents, viz Mahat or Buddhi, Ahamkāra, and the Five Tanmātrās (महदाद्या विशेषान्ता ह्यण्डमुत्पादयन्ति ते, विष्णु० १।२।५०, लिंग० १।३।१८, Kirfel, ibid , p 9) The egg is nothing else except an envelope of these seven, viz Manas, Prāna and the Five Elements. Each individual centre is an egg, having its प्रजापति ब्रह्मा, and a whole miniature universe within it :

तस्मिन्नण्डे त्विमे लोका अन्तर्विश्वमिदं जगत् । अण्डं दशगुणेनैव वारिणा प्रावृतं बहि. ।। (लिंग० १।३।२९।३०)

The universe is equal to millions and billions of such eggs :

सप्ताण्डावरणान्याहुस्तस्यात्मा कमलासन. । कोटिकोट्युतान्यत्र चाण्डानि कथितानि तु ।। (लिंग० १।३।३३)

As a side issue of the एकार्णवविधि is the description of ऋषि मार्कण्डेय and the वटपत्रशायी बालनारायण floating on the surface of the billowy ocean (हरिवंश, ३।१०।१२–६९). मार्कण्डेय is the ancient sage (बहुवर्षसहस्रायु, हरि० ३।१०।३७) endowed with a life of many thousand years. He is the same as मार्तण्ड, whom divine mother Aditi brought to life for the cyclic process of birth and death मार्कण्डेय is thus the symbol of time. मार्कण्डेय is the son of अंगिरा, the latter being but another name of अग्नि. बालनारायण is the newly created life, the Young Boy, कुमार, who is fresh with every new lease of the creative process (नवो नवो भवति जायमान:) As the Babe, he typifies the Unconscious becoming to incarnate in creation as the conscious mind He is described as engaged in his pastime (क्रीडा, लीला) for the purpose of creation, a natural spontaneous expression, involving no conscious effort.

8 Painting

The beautiful painting reproduced with this essay is from an illustrated Bhāgavata manuscript which has now become dispersed. The painting is preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan museum of the Banaras Hindu University and is reproduced with the kind permission of its Director, Rai Krishnadasa.

The painting belongs to the best phase of the Pahari School of Kangra and may be assigned to circa 1775-1800 A D. It is the work of a genius, a rare example

of symbolic illustration cultivated under the Pahari idiom The billowy ocean, its mounting waves and whirling watery spirals are depicted with grand success and their harmonious effect becomes impressed on the mind Against a blue blackground is depicted हिरण्यगर्भ, the Golden Egg, radiant with brilliant gold The miniature is an aesthetic creation of charming quality both for its drawing and colour In its silent way it imparts a meaning that is deep beyond words. On the reverse is inscribed the following śloka of श्रीमद्भागवत—

हिरण्मय. स पुरुष. सहस्रपरिवत्सरान् । आण्डकोश उवासाप्सु सर्वसत्त्वोपबृंहितः ॥ (भाग० ३।६।६)

'With Water all round, lay within the the shell of the Egg, the Golden Purusha, with his team of universal beings, for the duration of a thousand years' The golden radiance of the Egg shining through its seven shells (सप्तावरण, विष्णु १।२।१०) is the Tapas or Prānic Power of नारायण पुरुष lying with in it

9- The Egg-Its Modern View

The quickened Egg is an important biological conception Each individual animal begins life as an egg and attains maturity or its adult structure in a period (which constitutes his संवत्सर) arbitrarily determined With perhaps a very few exceptions all multicellular animals reproduce sexually (cf the Father-Mother, or Sky-Earth conception in the splitting of the egg) The Mother principle is the विराज् and the Father principle is the seed depositing or quickening स्वयम्भू called नारायण, because he fixes his abode in the watery cell (नारा., आप, विराज्). The new individual obtains life by a fusion of the two cells, one, the spermatozoon being produced by the male, and the other the ovum or egg (अण्ड) by the female parent These two reproductive cells always differ greatly in size and appearance, but have an equal influence on the characters of the animal arising from their fusion Fertilisation is the act of fusion of a spermatazoon or the male cell with an egg or the female ovum This releases a series of most miraculous developments accompanied by the division of cells and successive cleavages which give rise to the central nervous system and the associated systems, like the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, excretory and procreative. This is a field of study for the modern science of embryoyology

10. नारायणस्य चेष्टयानुप्रविष्टमाण्डम्

In the Purānic accounts too, the egg is a complex structure in terms of its cosmogonic data. For example, it is stated in the Bhāgavata that the immobile (कूटस्थ) Purusha deposits its seed in the विराज् or आण्ड (egg), and with His divine

potency known as काल (Time) the egg is entered simultaneously by twenty three creative categories (त्रयोविंशतिक गण) as follows

१ महत्तत्व
२ अहंकार
३ मनस्
४-८ पंच ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि
९-१३ पंच कर्मेन्द्रियाणि
१४-१८ पंच तन्मात्रा
१९-२३ पंच भूतानि

These 23 Tattvas constitute the Person (अधिपूरुष) within the womb of the egg known together as विश्वसृट्. By themselves these categories stand disconnected and therefore are unable to start the work of creation. Having entered all of these at one and the same time Nārāyana as the अन्तर्यामी Purusha, unites them by His active power, and stimulates their dormant energy. When they are thus roused into activity, the twenty-three categories, impelled as they are by the Divine Power, evolve the cosmic as well as the individual Body out of their own parts and undergo transformation as a result of mutual cooperation:

सोऽनुप्रविष्टो भगवाश्चेष्टारूपेण तं गणम् । भिन्न सयोजयामास सुप्तं कर्म प्रबोधयम् ॥३
प्रबुद्धकर्मा दैवेन त्रयोविंशतिको गणः । प्रेरितो-जनयत् स्वाभिमात्राभिरधिपूरुषम् ॥४
परेण विशता स्वस्मिन् मात्रया विश्वसृग्गण । चुक्षोभान्योऽन्यमासाद्य यस्मिल्लोकाश्चराचरा ॥५ (भागवत ३।६)

Brahmā, Rudra and Vishnu,—the three Gods or the Triple Gunas—all dwell in the Egg, and a whole universe with its systems of many worlds inheres within the subtle womb of the Egg

जलबुद्बुदवत्तस्मादवतीर्णं पितामह ॥२८
स एव भगवान् रुद्रो विष्णुर्विश्वगत प्रभु । तस्मिन्नण्डे त्विमे लोका अन्तर्विश्वमिदं जगत् ॥२९ (लिंग० १।३)

The Egg is the material manifestation (प्राकृत सर्ग) of the Divine Person (पुरुषाधिष्ठित, लिंग० १।३।३९). The Divine Potency and the inherent energy of the Egg impel it to attain its numerical evolutions as One, Threefold and Tenfold [1]. The One is called its Centre (हृदय), the Three are *adhyātma*, *adhidaiva* and *adhibhūta*, and the Ten are the ten Prānic constituents of Virāj [2]

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१ स वै विश्वसृजा गर्भो देवकर्मात्मशक्तिवान् । विबभाजात्मनात्मानमेकधा दशधा त्रिधा ॥७॥
साध्यात्म साधिदेवश्च साधिभूत इति त्रिधा । विराट् प्राणो दशविध एकधा हृदयेन च ॥९॥
(भागवत० ३।६)

2 In Vedic data, the ten elements of विराज् include—1 प्राण, 2 देवता, 3. ऋतु, 4 दिक्, 5 छन्द, 6 स्तोम, 7 पृष्ठ्य, 8 साम, 9 ग्रह, and 10 ऋषि (पं० मधुसूदन ओझा, महर्षिकुल वैभव, p 227). These are the ten sons of वैराजमनु, the ten primeval Prajāpati Rishis named Bhrigu, Angiras, Atri, Vasistha, Prachetas, Nārada, Marīchi, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu (Manu 1.35)

Virāj is also the name of the Cosmic Cow (विराड् वै गौ, श० ७।५।२।१९ ; यजु १३।४३, गा मा हिंसीरदितिं विराजम्). She is Aditi, the Universal Divine Mother, whose child is the fertilised Egg—हिरण्यगर्भ. He is सूर्य and its प्राण, the Life principle symbolised by the Sun (प्राण. प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्य., मं० उ० ६।८). He is the Navel of Immortality (प्राण. प्रजानाममृतस्य नाभि., अथर्व० ९।१।४), the Dispenser of the immortal and the mortal in their respective spheres (निवेशयन्नमृतं मर्त्यं च, ऋ० १।३५।२). Each centre of manifestation is a Golden Calf, produced from its Golden Egg Each हिरण्यगर्भ is floating in its cosmic moisture and concealing within it all the possibilities of existence

4. THE SYMBOLISM OF THE THREE BROTHERS

The Asyavāmīya Sūkta of the Rigveda, which is the work of Rishi Dīrghatamas, begins with the following mantra

अस्य वामस्य पलितस्य होतुस्तस्य भ्राता मध्यमो अस्त्यश्न ।
तृतीयो भ्राता घृतपृष्ठो अस्यात्रापश्यं विश्पतिं सप्तपुत्रम् ॥ (Rv I. 164 1)

Let us first cite the English rendering by Griffith

'Of this benignant Priest, with eld grey-coloured, the brother midmost of the three is lightning The third is he whose back with oil is sprinkled Here I behold the Chief with seven male children.'

He also adds the following note

'The *priest* is Āditya, the Sun His next brother is lightning, another form of fire, and the third brother is *Agni Gārhapatya,* the western sacred fire maintained by each householder, and fed with oblations of clarified butter The *seven male children* are probably the priests

Wilson's translation is as follows :

'I have beheld the Lord of Men with seven sons, of which delightful and benevolent (deity), who is the object for invocation, there is an all-pervading middle brother, and a third brother, well fed with (oblations of) ghee' He also adds a note :

'According to Sāyana however, the general purport of this Sūkta is the inculcation of the doctrine of the Vedānta, or the spiritual unity of Brahma and the universe : some passages occur that bear him out in this view, but the text, upon the whole, although often mystical and obscure, evidently proposes the glorification of Āditya, or the sun, especially as identifiable with all creation.'

Dr Kunhan Raja who is the latest translator of this Sūkta, writes about it 'This is one of the most interesting and important hymns in the whole range of the Vedic literature It is without a parallel in the Vedas It is highly philosophical ; most of the philosophical ideas are found here as basis for the later thoughts of India It is full of mysticism It is obscure It is mainly in the form of a riddle, it was originally meant as a riddle and it has become a more insoluble riddle for us than for the people of those ancient days. The background is gone We do not know what the author had in his mind when he composed these lines He must have presumed that the people of those days understood him, the thinking section of the people Various notions and symbols

current in those days are now lost to us, and so we do not have the necessary apparatus to work up the full and precise meaning of the lines in this poem.' The rendering of the first verse of the Asyavāmīya hymn by Dr Kunhan Raja is almost the same as that of Wilson, but the former is more explicit and bold in admitting the difficulties inherent in understanding the meaning of the hymn, including its first verse. Yāska, as pointed out by Sāyana, also briefly commented on this verse

अस्य वामस्य वननीयस्य पलितस्य पालयितुर्होतुर्ह्वातव्यस्य भ्राता मध्यमो अस्त्यश्नो भ्राता भरतेर्हरतिकर्मणो भरते भागं भर्तव्यो भवतीति वा तृतीयो भ्राता घृतपृष्ठो अस्यायमग्निस्तत्रापश्यं सर्वस्य पातारं वा पालयितारं वा विश्पति सप्तपुत्रं सप्तमपुत्रं सर्पणपुत्रमि ति वा सप्त सृप्ता संख्या सप्तादित्यरश्मय इति वदन्ति ।

(Nirukta, II. 4 26)

As explained by Durga, Yāska here takes the Three Brothers to be Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, a symbolism of very wide occurrence in Vedic literature and of fundamental significance in the exposition of Vedic cosmogony. Although basically right, Yāska is not clear enough and he evades tackling many questions that crop up here.

Why should the First Brother be called *vāma* and *palita* at the same time? What are the meanings of these two words—is it necessary to interpret *palita* as *pālayitā*, or is Griffith right in taking it as 'old grey-coloured? What is the syntactical connection of *asya* with *tasya*, a point raised by Sāyana but not satisfactorily answered? Is *aśna* to be taken as *aśana*, that is *vyāpanaśīla* 'all-pervading', as taken by Wilson? What is the real significance of *ghritaprishtha* and why should the third Brother be so called? Does *ghrita* mean water or butter? Who is really the Viśpati and why is he so called? What is the significance of the word *sapta putra*, and who are in reality the Seven Sons. These questions invade any conscientious effort to understand this verse and answers to them should be supplied as naturally as possible, without deviating either from the basic meaning of words or from the Vedic tradition. I set forth below the interpretation as I have been able to make out by an approach to Vedic symbolism.

This *mantra* refers to God Agni with his Three Brothers and Seven Sons. Agni is to be identified with that particular manifestation of this deity that abides in each Purusha and is called Vaiśvānara :

स एष अग्निर्वैश्वानरो यत्पुरुषः (Śatapatha, X. 6. 1 11)

अयमग्निर्वैश्वानरो योऽयमन्तः पुरुषे येनेदमन्नं पच्यते यदिदमद्यते तस्यैव घोषो भवति यमेतत्कर्णावपिधाय शृणोति स यदोत्क्रमिष्यन्भवति नैतं घोषं शृणोति । (Brih Up., V. 9. 1)

The fire within the Person or the body is called Vaiśvānara It is the same as Prānāgni, or the principle of Life residing within all beings It is the immortal spark of the Divine flame that sustains all creatures

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिना देहमाश्रित. ।
प्राणापान समायुक्त. पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ (Gītā, 15 14)

The doctrine of the Vaiśvānara Agni was well-known in the Rigveda. 'The wise and holy Deities engendered Agni Vaiśvānara whom age ne'er touches, the Ancient Star that wanders on for ever, lofty and strong, Lord of the Living Being' —

वैश्वानरं कवयो यज्ञियासोऽग्नि देवा अजयन्नजुर्यम् ।
नक्षत्रं प्रत्नममिनच्चरिष्णु यक्षस्याध्यक्षं तविषं बृहन्तम् ॥ (Rig X 88 13)

In the same Sūkta (X 88) Vaiśvānara and Sūrya are regarded as identical:

'Head of the world is Agni in the night-time, then as the Sun, at morn springs up and rises' (X 88 6)

'What time the Gods, whose due is worship, set him as Sūrya, Son of Aditi, in heaven

When the Pair, ever wandering, sprang to being, all creatures that existed looked upon them' (X 88 11)

'For all the world of life the Gods made Agni Vaiśvānara to be the Bright Banner of creation .—

Him who hath spread abroad the radiant Mornings, and coming with his light, unveils the darkness' (X 88. 12).

'We call upon the sage with holy verses, Agni Vaiśvānara the ever-beaming

Who hath surpassed both heaven and earth in greatness . he is a God below, a God above us.' (X. 88 14)

That Agni Vaiśvānara as the divine essence, is the guard of our bodies is clearly stated in the Rigveda :

'First the Gods brought the hymnal into being ; then they engendered Agni, then oblation

He was their sacrifice that guards our bodies (*tanūpā*) · him the heavens know, the earth, the waters know him (X 88 8).

The symbolism of the Three Brothers of Agni mentioned in I. 164. 1 is also explicit in the Vaiśvānara Sūkta, when the Rishi enquires:

'How many are the Fires and Suns in numbers ?'

कत्यग्नयः कति सूर्यासः (X 88 18).

The reply is found in verse 10 of the same Sūkta

'Then by the laud the Gods engendered Agni in heaven, who fills both worlds through strength and vigour.

They made him to appear in threefold essence he ripens plants of every form and nature' :

स्तोमेन हि दिवि देवासो अग्निमजीजनञ्छक्तिभी रोदसिप्राम् ।

तमू अकृण्वन् त्रेधा भुवे कं स ओषधी: पचति विश्वरूपा: ॥ (X. 88 10)

This threefold essence of the Vaiśvānara Fire is the same as the Triad of the three Gods Agni, Vāyu & Āditya, whom Yāska takes to be the Three Brothers of Agni :

देवेभिर्न्विषितो यज्ञियेभिरग्निं स्तोषाण्यजरं बृहन्तम् ।

यो भानुना पृथिवीं द्यामुतेमामाततान रोदसी अन्तरिक्षम् ॥

'Inspired by gods who claim our adoration, I now will laud Eternal Lofty Agni,

Him who hath spread abroad the earth with lustre, this heaven, and both the worlds and airs mid-region' (X. 88 3)

Prithvī, *Antriksha* and *Dyauḥ* are the three worlds of Vedic cosmology and Agni, Vāyu, Āditya are the triple Deities who constitute a trinity into which one transcendent Brahman has descended to the, plane of manifestation. The Intrinsic Power (*Svadhā*) of Agni Vaiśvānara is that mysterious force which is the basis of the manifested worlds, and through whose Celestial Nature the Gods function so that the world may be upheld and sustained :

तस्य भर्मणे भुवनाय देवा धर्मणे कं स्वधया पप्रथन्त । (X 88. 1)

'The world was swallowed and concealed in darkness.

Agni was born and light became apparent.

The deities, the broad earth, and the heavens, and plants, and waters gloried in his friendship'

गीर्णं भुवनं तमसापगूह्ळमाविः स्वरभवज्जाते अग्नौ । (X 88 2).

In another Sūkta (I 98) Vaiśvānara Agni is said to be the supreme king over all living things, who springs to life here on earth and looking on All, he, Vaiśvānara, hath rivalry with Sūrya :

वैश्वानरस्य सुमतौ स्याम राजा हि कं भुवनानामभिश्री: । इतो जातो विश्वमिदं विचष्टे वैश्वानरो यतते सूर्येण ॥
(I. 98. 1)

Sūrya, the Supernal sun, is the font and centre of life in the cosmos and also Agni Vaiśvānara within all embodied beings or Persons (स एषोऽग्निर्वैश्वानरो यत्पुरुषः).

Vaiśvānara is the designation of this Agni, the mysterious Life-force within living beings because it is engendered by the three Deities coalescing together with their intrinsic powers manifested in the three Lokas, i. e. on the triple plane of Mind, Life and Matter :

स य. स वैश्वानर. । इमे स लोका इयमेव पृथिवी विश्वमग्निर्नरः । अन्तरिक्षमेव विश्वं वायुर्नरः । द्यौरेव विश्वमादित्यो नरः । Śatapatha, IX 3 1.3)

All other fires are like branches of the Vaiśvānara Agni which is the navel or centre of all (वैश्वानर नाभिरसि क्षितीनाम्) and like a pillar sustaineth all (वैश्वानरो महिम्ना विश्वकृष्टिः, I, 59 7) and the immortal Gods all rejoice in him, for he is the immortal essence amongst mortal men

The author of the Asyavāmīya calls this Agni a Hotā, and in the Vaiśvānava Sūkta also he is styled as the Primeval Hotā whom all the Gods accept (यो होताऽऽसीत् प्रथमो देवजुष्ट., X 88 4) The Three Brothers correspond to his threefold essence (तमू अकृण्वन् त्रेधा भुवे कम्, X 88. 10), in which is implied the entire gamut of Vedic triads Agni is called Hotā because engendered within the body as the controlling energy it calls or invokes from outside the gross material elements and the sensory perceptions and whatever it receives it offers to the metabolic life-force within the body It is the Chief Priest of the Yajña within each system.

The principle of Life (*Prāṇāgni*) is two fold, viz cosmic and eternal called *palita* (eld or grey-haired) and young and beautiful called *vāma*, recreated in each new birth (नवो नवो भवति जायमान·) The former is the Ancient Sage and the latter the Wonderful Boy also called *Kumāra*

The pair of *asya* and *tasya* is significant but not properly explained. Sāyana raises the question, but does not meet it satisfactorily :

अत्र द्वीतीयपादे तच्छब्दश्रुते प्रथमपादे प्रतिविशेपणं योग्यक्रियार्थसंबन्धो यच्छब्दो ऽध्याहार्यं । योऽयं दिवि द्योतते तस्य अस्य वामस्य ।

He refers both तस्य and अस्य to *Vāma* which is a forced construing. The fact is that अस्य refers to वामस्य and तस्य to पलितस्य. The conjoint pair of This and That is here mentioned with the two aspects of Agni, viz *asya vāmasya* which is young and recent i e a new birth on this earth, and *tasya palitasya* which is ancient and eternal existing for ever on the cosmic plane 'Of This' and 'of That' is the correct meaning, the former referring to the mundane manifestation of Life and the latter to its unmanifest existence on the supramundane plane,

Vāma and *Palita* as the two aspects of Agni have also reference to the Vāmana and Virāt forms of Vishnu. Vāma is rendered as dwarf (*kubjasya śarīrena parichchhinnasya*) by Ātmananda, whose commentary on this Sukta Dr. Kunhan Raja has published. By his three strides Vishnu of dwarfish form assumes a cosmic appearance:

वामनो ह विष्णुरास (शतपथ १।२।५।५) ।
स हि वैष्णवो यद्वामनः (शतपथ ५।२।५।४) ।

These two forms of Vishnu are the same as that of युवा कुमार (= वामन) and of बृहच्छरीर (= विराट्) as mentioned in the following verse

चतुर्भिः साकं नवतिं च नामभिश्चक्रं न वृत्तं व्यतीरवीविपत् । बृहच्छरीरो विमिमान ऋक्भिर्युवाकुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम् ॥
(I 155 6)

The mantra is significant for giving a clear conception of Vishnu's striding or movement. He is a young Boy at one end and then measures out his vast form as the cosmic Deity. The Rikva units of speech help him in this development. He disposes his movement or strides (here called 'swift horses') in the form of a round wheel comprised of four inclinations (चतुर्भि. नामभि. where नाम = नमन) of ninety each. This contains an explicit mention of a circle with four right angles of ninety degrees each, making in all 360 degrees or 360 days of the earth's revolution. The latter is the Chakra of Vishnu, also called Sudarśana, which is based on a central Svastika of four equal angles, also called the four quarters of space.

Vishnu then is the first Brother who represents the principle of Growth achieved by his strides or movement. He is both young and old, for Growth implies a change from youth to elderliness, or from minuteness to vastness of form. The three strides correspond to the three Lokas, i.e. Earth, Mid-region and Sky, and the interval between Pṛithivi and Dyauh is the round wheel of Vishnu. Growth, pulsation, motion or striding is the first requisite of Life or Prāna. It is both young and old, young at the centre and waxing towards the circumference.

Here then we get an insight into the symbolism of the Three Brothers. If one is Vishnu, the other two must be Brahmā and Śiva. These smack of later Puranic development, but basically the three Gods stand for the trinitarian principle of creation. The three Gods, the three Gunas, the three Fires and the three Worlds as well as a host of other Triads are of identical significance, although named differently on the diverse planes of manifestation. The Purāna dictum itself is explicit on this point.

एत एव त्रयो देवा एत एव त्रयो गुणा· । एत एव त्रयो लोका एत एव त्रयोऽग्नय. ॥
(Linga Purāna, I 70 78)

Three Fires in the sacrifice represent the earliest and most emphatic version of the Trinity inherent in the process of creation

The Middle Brother is said to be *aśna*, i e a voracious eater This refers to the second characteristic feature of Life, viz assimilation of food and elimination The pot-bellied deity Brahmā is the archetype of the law of अन्न-अन्नाद which is an essential feature of Prāna or Life

The third typical factor in the organisation of Life is its capacity of reproduction or procreation The seed laid in the womb of the mother sprouts, grows, fructifies and gives birth to another seed The plant, tree or body is but a means to re-create the seed The ancient seed repeats itself through each succeeding new generation and the chain continues through all time, each end being linked to a new beginning This feature of reproduction is the hall mark of the Third Brother, Śiva, who is the controller of the God of Love The epithet *ghrita-prishtha*, as will be explained below, stands for the progenitive faculty of Life

The three essential features which are present in all centres where life becomes manifest are Growth, Assimilation and Procreation These are the Three Brothers of Agni, functioning inseparably and with mutual coherence. We get many names and forms for them, but the essential connotation remains the same. For example, in the Asyavāmīya Sūkta itself they are called Aja (I. 164 6), Akshara and Kshara (I 164 42) The Gītā names them as Avyaya, Akshara and Kshara, where Avyaya is the same as Aja (Gītā, 15–16–17) Each of them is a Purusha, but they are designed to function together in an integrated organism, that is the body In another verse of the Asyavāmīya there is reference to blood, life and spirit which are manifest in each individual organism comprised of the material elements

भूम्यारसुरसृगात्मा क्वस्वित् (I 164 4)

Here the three factors are:

1.	असृक्	Blood	भूत	Matter
2.	असु	Life or Vitality	प्राण	Life
3.	आत्मा	Mind or Spirit	मनस्	Mind

It is the same thing as वाङ्मय. प्राणमय मनोमय आत्मा (where वाक् stands for the Pañcha-Bhūtas)

We may thus set forth the Three Brothers in a tabular form:

1.	क्षर	अक्षर	अव्यय
2.	विष्णु	ब्रह्मा	शिव

3.	सत्त्व	रज	तम
4.	असक्	असु	आत्मा
5.	वाक् (=भूत)	प्राण	मन
6	गार्हपत्य	दक्षिणाग्नि	आहवनीय
7.	पृथिवी	अन्तरिक्ष	द्यौ
8.	अग्नि	वायु	आदित्य
9.	वृद्धि	अशनाया	प्रजनन
10	Growth	Assimilation	Procreation

In the phrase अत्रापश्यम्, 'here have I beheld' अत्र refers to each individual centre, organism or body where Life becomes manifest in its rhythmic pulsation as तनूपा. (X 88 7). विश्पति or 'lord of Viś' is Agni Vaiśvanara itself, the Chief of all the Agnis' and the bright Banner shining over all the world of life. All living creatures represent the Viśah, and Agni has its abode amongst all as their Guest;

अग्निरकामयत विशोऽतिथि. स्या विशो विश आतिथ्यमश्नुवीयेति (ताण्ड्य ब्रा० १४।११।३७) ।

Agni stands for the principal life-force (मध्यप्राण) and other vital airs are subsidiary to him, offering allegiance as do the Sāmanta feudatories to a sovereign Chief. Where Angi is present, all other Gods must follow suit (स देवाँ एह वक्षति, II. 2), since he is the chief diety in the sacrifice (अग्नि सर्वा देवता, ऐ० ब्रा० २।३, अग्नौ हि सर्वाभ्यो देवताभ्यो जुह्वति, शतपथ १।६।२।८, अग्निर्देवाना जठरम्, तैत्तिरीय, २।७।१२।३ ; प्रजापतिर्देवता. सृजमान अग्निमेव देवताना प्रथमसृजत, तैत्तिरीय २।१।६४) ।

Agni is said to be the Chief with Seven Sons (सप्तपुत्रम्). The symbol of the Seven Sons is one of the many Vedic heptads like सप्तहोता, सप्ततन्तु, सप्तरत्न, सप्तचिति, सप्तपुरुष, सप्तधाम, सप्तलोक, सप्तार्धगर्भाः (I 164 36), सप्तस्वसार, सप्तमातर., सप्तवाणी, सप्तप्राणा, सप्तपदानि, etc.

The Seven Sons (सप्त पुत्रा.) are the same as सप्तार्ध गर्भा i e. the Seven Children of Ardha which constitute the seed of the cosmos (भुवनस्य रेतः, I 164 36) There was the conception of an eternal ancient seed of the universe which itself remaining unmanifest and unborn gave birth to the concrete and manifest worlds This was called the प्रत्न रेत. which concealed within itself all the categories of manifestation The undifferentiated Brahman divides itself into two Halves for the sake of creation •

अर्धेन विश्वं भुवनं जजान यदस्यार्ध. कतम. स केतु. (अथर्व १०।८।१३) ।

One Ardha remains unmanifest and unknown, the second Ardha becomes this universe. Seven are the sons of the latter Ardha comprising:

I Mind—मनस्

II Life—प्राण

III–VII Matter – वाक् or पंचभूत (Five Gross Elements)

These seven are the seven sons of Agni According to the dictum that the Father begest himself as the son, Agni becomes these seven sons for the sake of creation The bodies of all living creatures are constituted of an aggregation of Mind or Consciousness, Life or Vital Force, and Matter or the Five Gross Elements.

The symbolism of the epithet घृतपृष्ठ associated with the Third Brother is based on the conception of Infinite Nature as a Cow. Nature is the Great Mother (Magna Mater, मही माता) She as Cow has various names, e g Aditi, Kāmadughā, Kevalī, Dakshinā, Viśvarupā, Viśvadhāyas, Priśni, also called Śabalā, and Kāmadhenu in Puranic tradition A cow is *par excellence* the milk-giving animal, but she yields milk only when she has been fecundated by a Bull and has calved Cow is therefore essentially the symbol of motherhood and generation The quality of endless generation is the chief characteristic of Nature and she is regarded in all ancient cultures as the Great Mother, i e the mother of men, animals, birds, reptiles and plants Where there is motherhood or generation there is milk or the vitalising food which the generatrix produces by the chemistry of her own body for the sustenance of the offspring Milk is the symbol of that sustaining food. What is the distinguishing quality of milk as against water ? The obvious answer is that milk is watery liquid which contains minute globules of butter Conversion of water into milk is the miracle of motherhood, and the distinction between the two consists in the presence of butter (*ghrita*) in milk which was non-existent in water

The above symbolical import of milk and butter was emphatically recognised in the formulation of Vedic cosmogonic definitions, and it is oft repeated that *payas* and *ghrita* are universally present in nature wheresoever there is an act of generation or motherhood Aditi or Infinite Nature, Mother of the Gods, is designated as the immortal cosmic cow

माता रुद्राणा दुहिता वसूना स्वसादित्यानाममृतस्य नाभि· ।
प्र नु वोचं चिकितुषे जनाय मा गामनागामदिति वधिष्ट ॥

(VIII 101 15)

The highest encomium is showered upon Aditi in the Rigveda. She is endowed with blessings which are perfect, irresistible (*anarva*), unrivalled (*aneha*), celestial (*svarvat*) deathless (*avadha*), meet for worship (*namasvat*, I 185, 3) Changeless cosmic order is her true form (*ritāvarī*) and as the Supreme Mother she brought forth Mitra and Varuna (VIII. 25. 3)

Motherhood is associated with Soma and Fatherhood with Agni. Agni and Soma form an inseparable pair, and so also Father and Mother constitute a parental pair essential for creation and spoken of as *Dyāvā-pṛithivī* (द्यौ· पिता पृथिवी माता). The cow must be fertilised by the bull who plants the seed within her. The cow symbolises Soma and the bull Agni, and the seed is *ghṛita* ·

रेतो वै घृतम् (शत० ६।२।३।४४),
रेत आज्यम् (शत० १।३।१।१८) ।

That which is *ghṛita* is the tangible form of Agni

आग्नेयं वै घृतम् (शत० ७।४।१।४१)
एतद्वा अग्ने प्रियं धाम यद् घृतम् (तैत्ति० १।१।६।६)
एतद्वै प्रत्यक्षाद् यज्ञरूप यद् घृतम् (शत० १२।८।२।१५)
अग्नेर्वा एतद्रूपं यदाज्यम् (तैत्ति० ३।८।१४।२) ।

If we throw water on the burning fire, the flames are put out, but if we pour butter the fire is fiercely enkindled. Therefore *Ghṛita* or *Ājya* was taken as the symbol of Agni, it is the ancient seed of the universe (प्रत्न रेतः) that is produced from the Sarvahuta Yajña of Prajāpati, viz. his will to the act of creation ·

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः सम्भृतं पृषदाज्यम् (X. 90 8)

The Creator is the बीजप्रद पिता, the male principle who deposits the seed in the womb of the mother or Infinite Nature, the former being symbolised as स्वाहा and the latter as स्वधा, the former as Agni and the latter as Soma. The principle of Agni which converts water into milk is present in milk as its *ghṛita*, and this *ājya* is an ever-present quality in the milk of the cosmic cow Aditi. The whole earth is moistened with this butter ·

घृतेन पृथिवी व्युद्यते (I 164. 47)

Each particle of her material form is invested with the possibility of a creative act, and this quality is coeval with time

Thus all procreation by the two Parents is a joint act dependent on the seed of the male being deposited in the female. This is the law of the physical world. The seed (*retas*, *ājya*, *ghṛita*) is the seventh *dhātu*, the quintessence of all the bodily secretions, which saturates the central nervous system and the brain as the cerebro-spinal fluid. Its abstract from is the sex impulse or Kāma which belongs to the sphere of the mind :

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेत. प्रथमं यदासीत् (X. 129 4)

The Third Brother of Agni who is called घृतपृष्ठ is the Deity in whom all the sex-power is centred or resides. It is the sublimated Mind in perfect control of the erotic man. Śiva by his *samādhi* is said to sublimate both the animus and the anima into the supreme orderliness of the mind of the sage, and this is the moral of the Puranic legend of his encounter with the God of Love

The Three Brothers therefore are the three principal characteristics of the Life-force, variously designated by the string of names of the Vedic Triad, as अव्यय-अक्षर-क्षर, मन-प्राण-वाक्, प्रज्ञानात्म-प्राणात्मा-भूतात्मा, etc, as Brahmā, Vishnu, Śiva in the Purānas, and in modern terms may be referred to as Mind, Life and Matter, or Growth, Assimilation and Procreation which are the three essential features of each living organism.

5 THE ONE-FOOTED GOAT (अज एकपाद्)

The Aja Ekapād has been a riddle of the Rigveda, but the term is invested with significant meaning

The word Aja has a special significance in some *mantras* of the Rigveda, e g—

अचिकित्वाश्चिकितुषश्चिदत्र कवीन् पृच्छामि विद्मने न विद्वान् ।
वि यस्तस्तम्भ षडिमा रजास्यजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम् ॥ (ऋ० १।१६४।६)

This is a verse from the famous Asyavāmīya Sūkta of Rishi Dīrghatamas, which Griffith renders as follows

'I ask, unknowing, those who know, the sages, as one all ignorant for sake of knowledge, what was that One who in the Unborn's image hath established and fixed firm these world's six regions'

Aja may be taken as a technical term for the stationary, eternal or changeless principle, the stasis (*sthiti-tattva*) which is the source of all that moves and is born, Aja is the unmanifested source of all manifestation It is like the centre of the circle which is beyond all dimensional concepts

In the Rigveda, Aja is equated with *Ekam*, the One But this One is not connected with any numeral series or procession of numbers, like One, Two, Three . Infinity The nature of the *Ekam* that is in Aja is *kimapi-svit*, i e, some thing mysterious, inexpressible, beyond the power of speech or utterance, a unity which cannot be divided

For this Aja, it has been further said :

तमिद् गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवा समगच्छन्त विश्वे ।
अजस्य नाभावध्येकमर्पितं यस्मिन्विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्थु ॥
(Rig X. 82. 6)

'The waters (*Apah*) contained that primeval germ in which all the Gods were gathered He was Aja, the One, in whose navel all things existed'

The Waters are the mothers of the universe; they are the progenitrix of Agni. Agni is the first seed or support of all the Gods, i. e. the principle of movement or pulsation. Aja is Agni Prajāpati, firstly in its unmanifest form (प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अन्तरजायमान·) and again in manifestation (बहुधा विजायते). Aja upholds the six regions

(षडिमा रजांसि). *Rajas* has reference to the principle of motion, as against Aja which is the principle of rest, i. e. *sthiti* as against *gati*. The six regions are an extension of the one changeless fixed and eternal point which is the centre. They constitute the six *lokas* (*ime vai lokā rajāmsi*, Śatapatha, VI 3 1 18). In fact the six modifications or the six *rajāmsi*, are made up of the Vital Principle (*Prāna*) and the Five Gross Elements which proceed one from the other and constitute the gamut of manifest creation.

The Aja principle behind these is the principle of *Sattva* or Mind, known as Vishnu sleeping in the Ocean, who is the symbol of rest (*sthiti*) or *nidrā*, as against *kshobha*. Vishnu withdraws the *lokas*, within himself at the time of sleep (संहृत्य लोकान् पुरुषोऽधिशेते) and releases them as Brahmā or Aja from his navel at the time of creation. The formula is :—

स्थिति = निद्रा । अज = अज एकपाद् = निद्रागत नारायण विष्णु ।

The Rigveda refers to the two deities Aja Ekpād and Ahi Budhnya, the former signifies the 'one-footed goat' and the latter the 'dragn of the deep'. The terms are rather obscure. 'Roth, with whom Grassmann agrees regards *Aja Ekpād* as a genius of the storm, translating the name as the one-footed Driver or Stormer'. Bloomfield and Victor Henry think he represents a solar deity. Hardy believes that the 'goat who goes alone is the moon. Bergaigne, interpreting the name as 'the unborn (*a-ja*) who has only one foot', thinks this means he who inhabits the one isolated mysterious world. If another conjecture may be added, the name, meaning 'the one footed goat', was originally a figurative designation of lightning, the goat alluding to its agile swiftness in the cloud-mountains, and the one foot to the single streak which strikes the earth' (Macdonell, *Vedic mythology*' 73-74). It is obviously a case of groping in the dark and none seems to have understood the true meaning of the term and its real significance in the cosmogonic scheme of things.

It should be clear that Aja and Ekpād Aja are identical principles, signifying the unborn Prajāpati, the unmanifested source of creation which is transcendent and beyond the opration of numbers, i e. beyond *nānātva* and *bahudhā* and therefore rightly designated as *Ekam* (*Ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti*, Rig I 164 46; *Ajasya nābhavadhyekam arpitam*, Rig X 82 6).

The question arises as to the meaning of *ekapād*. It is called *ekapād* or one-footed for the reason that *ekapād* or one-footed denotes the absence of motion, that which has only one foot symbolies the principle of rest. Motion is the quality of one who is two footed. The one-footed goat is a reality in the repertoire of Indian showmen who make the goat stand on one leg by contracting the other three

to join with it *Ekapād* therefore is synonymous with *apād*, 'the footless one', 'one who is free from the principle of locomotion' (cp. Rig X. 117. 8, एक पाद् भूयो द्विपदो विचक्रमे)।

Gaurī, the genius of Vāk, is spoken of originally as *ekapadī*, and then she unfolds herself as *dvipadī*, *chatushpadī* *ashtāpadī* and *navapadī* in manifestation In her unmanifested source (*parame vyoman*), she is *sahasrākshrā*, possessing a thousand *aksharas*, each *akshara* or syllable or unit of speech being the same as a foot in motion (I 164. 41)

In the Rigveda, Aja also denotes the yonder Sun that upholds heaven and earth .

अजो न क्षा दाधार पृथिवी
तस्तम्भ द्या मन्त्रैभि. सत्यै. । (Rig I. 67. 3)

Also Rig VIII 41 10

य: श्वेतां अधिनिर्णिजश्चक्रे कृष्णां अनुव्रता ।
स धाम पूर्व्यं ममे य. स्कम्भेन विरोदसी
अजो न द्यामधारयन्नभन्तामन्यके समे ।।

'Who, after his decree o'erspread the Dark Cows with a robe of light ;

Who measured out the ancient seat, who pillared both the worlds apart as the Unborn, supported heaven.

Let all the others die away.' (Griffith)

The two terms *śveta* and *krishṇa* are significant here, the former refers to the manifest creation and latter to its unmanifested source. *Rajas* is said to be twofold i. e black and white ·

तयोरन्यद् रोचते कृष्णमन्यत् । (Rig III 55 II)

The Black and the White are twin Sisters :

श्यावी च यदरुषी च स्वसारौ । (Rig III 55. II).

Elsewhere it is stated .

अहश्च कृष्णमहरर्जुनं च विवर्तेते रजसी वेद्याभिः। (Rig. VI. 9 I)

अह', or the principle of manifestation, has a twofold aspect, viz that which existed *ab intra*, containing all the passibilities of existence, referred to as black (*krishna*), and that which becomes manifest as this universe called 'white' (*arjuna*). These twin *Rajas* force are revolving, the one forcing and energising the other as the conjoint principles of Rest and Motion.

The Sun is constituted of this double aspect being propelled into manifest activity by the *krishṇa rajas* behind it :

आ कृष्णेन रजसा वर्तमानो निवेशयन्नमृतं मर्त्यं च । (Rig. I 35.).

Its manifest from is white and that which relates to darkness is black, the latter forming with the former a circle (*chakra*) revolving in eternal time Sūrya is verily the perfect symbol of that basal force or impulse which upholds the heaven and the earth of each creation, i e of the universal parents which bring into being all existent things.

6. GAURĪ (गौरी)

RV. I. 164 41 is a difficult passage .

> *Gaurīr mimāya salilāni takshaty-*
> *ekapadī dvipadī sā chatushpadī*
> *Ashtāpadī navapadī babhuvushī*
> *sahasrāksharā parame vyoman*

We first record its two renderings ·

Wilson—The sound (of the clouds) has been uttered, fabricating the waters, and being one-footed, two-footed, four-footed, eight-footed, or infinite in the highest heaven.

Griffith—Forming the water-floods, the buffalo hath lowed, one-footed or two-footed or four-footed, she, who hath become eight-footed or hath got nine feet, the thousand-syllabled in the sublimest heaven

It does not appear to us that the veil of obscurity has been lifted from over the stanza in these translations Recently van Buitenen has drawn attention to this passage, but without being able to shed any additional light [1] The stanza bristless with technical terms which should first be explained with clarity to reach the underlying meaning Who is *Gaurī* ? What is the meaning of *mimāya* in this context ? What is the reference to *salilāni* ? What is the exact conception of *takshatī* ? What is denoted by the symbolism of *ekapadī, dvipadī, chatushpadī, astāpadī* and *navapadī* ? What is meant by *sahasra* and *akshara* separately and conjointly ? Lastly what is the Vedic meaning of *parame vyoman* and how is the *sahasrāksharā* form of *Gaurī* consistent with *parame vyoman* ? Let us grapple with these questions

Gaurī—The accepted meaning is 'she buffalo, 'or the female *Bos Gaurus*. It is distinguished from the cow, the *Gaurī* being the symbol of Varuna's 'water' and the *Gauh* of Indra or Sūrya The reason is twofold, viz that the buffalo is an animal that loves water, and secondly its skin is of a dark colour, opposed to the white coat of a cow In Vedic cosmogony two stages are formulated, the preceding one is that of Varuna and the subsequent one of Indra Varuna is the lord of waters, the deity of the Ocean (*samudra*), the latter signifying the primeval source of the universe in which all matter exists in an undifferentiated form, and which conceals within its womb all the possibilities of existence

1 J A B. van Buitenen, "Akshara", *JAOS*, 79 (1959), 180.

Varuṇa is the great Asura that lords this Ocean. His representative in the subsequent creational stage is Vṛitra who enters into conflict with Indra Both Varuna and Vṛitra point to the basic root *vṛi*, 'to cover, to conceal to obstruct' (cf *yachcha vṛitvātishthams–tadvarano' bhavat tam vā etam varanam santam varuna ity āchakshate parokshena*, Gopatha Br , I 1 7 , *vṛitro ha vā idam sarvam vṛitvā śiśye yadidamantarena dyāvāprithivī sa yadidam sarvam vṛitvā śiśye tasmad vṛitro nāma*, Śatapatha Br I 1 3 4) Indra's representative in the region of Varuna is Mitra, the latter two being the divinities of water and fire *Gaurī* and *Gau* were accepted as the symbols of Varuna and Indra (including his cosmic aspect Brihaspati) respectively The Bison and the Bull (*Mahisha* and *Rishabha*) are their male forms which also occur in the Rigveda.

Gaurī is the symbol of *Vāk*, according to the speculation of the Brāhmanas[1] and the commentators, of whom Sāyaṇa takes it as *mādhyamikā vāk*, the thunder of the atmospheric region or clouds, and Ātmānanda as *gauram śuddham brahma, tatparā śrutih gaurīḥ*, i e the Vedic speech that is devoted to the doctrine of absolute Brahman [2] *Vāk* or speech plays an important part in the cosmogony of the Rigveda

Vāk is an attribute of *ākāśa*, and *ākāśa* is the first and foremost of the five gross material elements, and therefore *Vāk* became the symbol *par excellance* of the *Pañcha bhūtas* *Vāk* is preceded by *Prāna*, and *Prāna* by *Manas* in the successive order of cosmic evolution There is even a greater sublimation of the doctrine of speech in which Vāk is equivalent to Brahman, being both *aja* and *jāyamāna*, i. e. combining the transcendent and immanent aspects of Reality, or as the complete symbols of the entire cosmic coherence, therefore designated as *chatushpāt* According to the esoteric speculations of the Brāhmanas, fully countenanced by the Rigveda, *Vāk* as the one-footed (*ekapadī*) cow has reference to the unborn or transcendent aspect, and as the four-footed (*chatushpadī*) to that aspect which is the source of all the triadic patterns (*trika*), or pulsations (*prānāgni*), or motion (cf *Yā vāk so' gniḥ*, Gopatha Br. 2 4 11)

Mimāya—It has the simple meaning of 'uttering sound', 'bleating', lowing', from the root *mā*, which refers to the bellowing sound of cows, calves, etc The root *mā* (*mimāti, mimīte*) also means 'to measure out,' 'to apportion' It is precisely both meanings that hold good here The spatial depth to which the lowing of the milch-cow that is Vāk travels, marks the measure of her formulating the cosmic forms.

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1 A very important citation from the Jaim Up Br 1 10 1-2 being given by van Buitenen according to which She is *kāmadughā*, the milch cow of desires , the passage is an exegesis of the Rigveda, 1.164 41-42

2. C Kunhan Raja, *Asya Vāmasya Hymn* (1956), p 80.

The rhythmic pulsation of speech in the sacrifice defines the limits of *ākāśa* or the Pañcha bhūtas, i. e the material creation externalised through *yajña*. This is the articulation of *Vāk* through ritual, which on the cosmic level is the sacrifice of Prajāpati with the utterance of *brahman*, the most subtle and highest form of manifestation

The lowing cow is said to possess a cosmic form (*viśvarūpya*) which becomes completely manifest as soon as the cow has travelled a distance of three *yojanas* (*amīmed vatso anu gām apaśyad viśvarūpyam trishu yojaneshu*, RV 1 164. 9) This is a symbolical reference to the triad of *Manas-Prāṇa Vāk* (Mind-Life Matter) which constitutes the basic pattern of the cosmological manifestation envisaged in the Vedic metaphysics The three *yojanas* exhibit the *Viśvarūpya* or the totality of forms that the cosmic four-footed cow can create

Salilāni—This is a comprehensive term, synonymous with *āpaḥ*, *samudrāḥ* (RV. 1. 164 42), *arṇavah*, etc, referring to the primeval material cause that exists *in principium* and carries within its womb all the possibilities of existence. We have a clear statement in the RV. 10 121 7, *āpo ha yad brihatīr viśvam āyan garbham dadhānā janayantīr agnim, tato devānām samavartatāsur ekah kasmai devāya havishā vidhema.* Here the *brihatīḥ āpah* are the same as *salilāni* or *arnava samudra* They are called *brihatī*, 'mighty', because they have the potency of *brimhana*, 'growth' by way of producing Agni, which is the universal germ Agni represents the one life-principle (*eka asu*) of all the differentiated divinities in the cosmos. The region of these primeval waters is also spoken of as *rita sadana* (RV 1 164 47), the 'Dark Descent' (*krishna niyāna*, RV. 1 164 47) of Varuṇa, or the 'Dark roots' of cosmic alchemy The Purāṇas give an elaborate account of this primeval watery source under the caption of *ekārnava vidhi*,[1] specially with reference to the characteristic doctrine of *āpo nārāḥ* and *Nārāyaṇa* The cosmic primal waters (*salilāni*) represent the state of equilibrium (*sāmyāvasthā*), the stillness of the infinite Ocean, which becomes excited or agitated for the sake of creation The greatest achievement of the Waters which contain within their womb the universal germ (*viśva garbha*, RV. 10 121 7) is to give birth to Agni, which is therefore described as the first concrete manifestation of *Rita* (*agnir hi nah prathamajā ritsya pūrva āyuni vrishabhaśca dhenuḥ*, RV 10 5 7) and is spoken of both as the Milch cow and the Bull, for mutual fecundation to start the beginning of life *Brahma* is elsewhere said to be the 'first-born of all' (*brahmāsya sarvasya prathamajam*, Śatapatha Br 6 1 1 10), or Agni Prajāpati as the first born of *Rita* is said to cook the cosmic food (*Yan odanam prathamajā ritasya prajāpatis tapasa brahmane' pacat*, Atharva 4. 35 1). The last

1 W Kirfel, Das Purāna Pañcalakana (Leiden, 1927), pp. 6–19.

imagery assumes that Agni as the 'Eater of Food' (*annāda*) cooks for itself the 'food' (*anna*) which is the cosmos itself The intimate relationship of *Vāk* and Agni as the *ṛtasya prathamjā* is clearly enunciated in another stanza of the Rgveda. What thing I truly am I know not clearly mysterious, fettered in my mind I wander When the first-born of *Ṛta* enters within me, then of *Vāk*, I obtain the first portion (*na vijānāmi yadi vedam asmi ninyaḥ saṃnaddho manasā carāmi, yadā māgan prathamajā ṛtasyādid vāco aśnuve bhāgam asyāḥ*, RV 1. 164 37) The pulsation of life as the rhythmic uttering of *Vāk* on the plane of material or *ākāśika* manifestation begins with the birth of Agni on the substratum of *āpaḥ* or *salilāni* In RV 1 164 42, it is stated that the Oceans in which Gaurī has her abode undergo a pouring out or flowing of their contents by which the manifested cosmos is sustained (*tasyāḥ samudrā adhi vi ksharnti tena jīvanti pradiśas chatasraḥ*) This verily corresponds to the idea contained in *salilāni takshatī*.

Takshatī—The root-meaning of *taksha* is 'to fashion forms by cutting' and that meaning suits very well the context, provided it is clearly explained in the back-ground of an approved cosmogony. The conception of *takshaṇa* is kindred to that of *rūpa-vikartana* (cf *Tvashṭā hi rupāṇi vikaroti*, Taittirīya Br 2 7 2), *rūpa-pimśana, vi-ksharaṇa* (cf RV 1 164, 42), *prāṇana-apānana* (cf RV 10. 189 2), *saṃmañchana-prasāraṇa* (cf. Yajur 27. 45, also Śatapatha Br. 8 1 4 10), *kshobhaṇa* Mārkandeya Purāna, 46 12), *spandana* (Devī Bhāgavata, 1 7 50), etc.

Wilson translates *takshatī* as 'fabricating the waters', Griffith as 'forming the water floods', and van Buitenen as 'building(?) separate lakes' These are all correct in so far as they go, but the real significance is that the principle of *Vāk* creates or fashions the manifold forms out of the waters of the Infinite Ocean of the ultimate Reality Agni is the first manifestation, the same as *Akshara* or Hiranyagarbha, from the womb of the Waters and is the same as *Vāk* for the purpose of building separate units from the single undifferentiate Ocean (*Vāg vai tvashṭā vāg ghīdaṃ sarvam tashṭīva*, Aitareya Br 2 4) All the *rūpas* are called *tvāshṭra* (*tvāshṭrāni vai rūpāṇi*, Śatapatha Br. 2 2 3. 4), i e depend for their genesis on the principle of cutting, or making separate fragments out of one whole, i e Brahman, as *ekamevādvitīyam* is transformed into *bahudhā* (RV 1 64. 46), the single into One, Two, Three ...... and Infinity The work of *Vāk* as *Tvashṭā* is essential to creation, which is tantamount to the One *becoming* the Many, the One Rudra incarnating as the Thousand Rudras (Yajur. 16, 54) What is Tvashṭā in the Veda corresponds to Virūpākṣa of the Purānas, who is one of the Eleven Rudras (Cf Matsya Purāna, 5. 29-30).

Ekapadī—The string of five epithets, viz *ekapadī, dvipadī, chatushpadī, ashṭāpadī, navapadī* is undisputed as to literal meaning, but their symbolism is of metaphysical

significance *Pāda* is equivalent to 'motion', and *ekapadī*, or the one footed, is that which is capable of undivided motion, i e absence of all motion in different directions *Ekapadī* therefore refers to the principle of rest or stasis (*sthiti*), the locking of directional motions in the centre (*hṛdaya*) In the Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka 7 (cf Aitareya A 2 3 5 ff) a series of progenitive triads is expounded, of which the most significant from the point of view of motion is the one comprising *gati* (procession) and *nivṛtti* (recession) which are said to be the parents of *sthiti* (stasis)[1] *Gati* is Indra, *nivṛtti* or *āgati* is Visnu, and *sthiti* or *pratiṣṭhā* is Brahmā The one-footed cow corresponds to what is called Aja, the unborn (cf *ajasya rupe kimapi svid ekam*, RV 1 164. 6) or *Ūrdhva Eka*, the single Erect One (RV 1 164 10), or what is graphically called *Aja Ekapād* (RV 2 31 6, 10 66 11), the unborn one-footed or motionless principle of transcendental Reality, which in the Purāṇas is the name of the first of the Eleven Rudras (Matsya, 5 29). It may be noted that the Ekādaśa Rudras are the sons of Surabhi, the same as the Milch-cow of the Vedas (Harivaṁśa, I. 3 49-52) viz. Aditi, or Infinite Nature

Dvipadī—The two-footed cow is also a creature of phantasy It refers to that phase of *Vāk* in which the original transcendental Reality becomes relative for the sake of manifestation There is a Vedic conception to support it The absolute undifferentiated One (*Ekam* becomes divided as *Ardham* and *Ardham* (*Ardhena viśvam bhuvanam jajāna yadasyārdham kva tad babhūva*, Atharva, 10 8 7 , also 10. 8 13 with variant *yadasyārdham katamaḥ sa ketuḥ* , also 11 4 22) This basic metaphysical conception of the One being cast in two halves for creation goes back to the Rigveda, VI 30 1.

> *bhūya id vavṛidhe vīryāya eko ajuryo dayate vasūni |*
> *pra ririche diva Indraḥ pṛthivyā ardhamidasya prati rodasī ubhe ||*

Indra as *ekaḥ* undergoes self fission into two *ardhas*, the one is beyond earth and heaven (cf *katamaḥ sa ketuḥ*) and the other is manifest as the *rodasī* worlds

The doctrine of *ardha* is definitely mentioned in RV 1 164 36, which stanza, as noted by Griffith according to Ludwig, 'is one of the most unintelligible in the whole Veda' In view of the above explanation of *ardha*, the meaning becomes lucid Seven are the children of *Ardha* which constitute the seed of creation They function (as differentiated units) by Vishnu's ordinance (of triple striding) (*saptārdhagarbhā bhuvanasya reto vishnos tishthanti pradiśā vidharmaṇi*) The One becoming the cosmos evolves as *ardha* and *ardha* ; the latter *ardha* becomes triadic by Visnu's motion (cf. *idam vishnur vichakrame tredhā nidadhe padam*, RV. 1 22. 17), and then those

1 A Coomaraswamy, *Time and Eternity* (Artibus Asiae, 1947), p. 9

three encompass everything as seven, viz *manas*, *prāna* and *vāk* or the five gross elements, designated as the children of *ardha*, i. e. the manifested cosmos

The metaphysical principle of an underlying relative duality is enunciated emphatically in the Nāsadīya Sūkta (RV 10 129) as *sad-asad, amṛita mṛityu, parastāt-avastāt, prayati-svadhā* , also Purusha Sūkta (RV. 10 90) as *tripād-punaḥpāda, ūrdhva-iha* , also as *aditi-diti* (RV 5 62 8), *ṛita satya* (RV 10 190 1), *prānāpāna* (RV 10 189 2), *aja rajas* (RV 1 164,6), and many other categories of manifestation, e g *avyaya akshara, agni-soma*, etc These are related to the conception of *Vāk* as *dvipadī*, of which the two feet are OM and AUM, the latter symbolising the triadic patterns that have flowed into the three worlds, of which the most significant are the three utterances (*vyāhṛitis*) known as *bhūḥ, bhuvah, svaḥ*. One foot of the *dvipadī* cow is fixed, changeless, eternal, same as *sthānu*, expressed as *Eka eva Rudro na dvitīyāya tasthe* (Taitt Sam, 1.8 6 1 , it is the one foot which the golden Hamsa stationed in the floods or precosmic Waters does not move (*ekam pādam notkhidati salilād dhamsa uchcharan*, Atharva 11 4 21), while the other foot is identical with motion by which cosmos is engendered

Chatushpadī—The four-footed cow is a normal animal, which in the symbolism of *Vāk* is mentioned in RV 1 164 45 . *chatvāri Vāk parimitā padāni tāni vidur brāhmaṇā ye manīshinah, guhā trīni nihitā neṅgayanti turīyam vācho manushyā vadanti*

Here the three feet are said to be hidden in the cave, i e unmanifest and only the fourth foot becomes manifest as human speech It exactly corresponds to the conception of four-footed Purusha. of whom *tripād* is 'above' and one *pāda* is this manefest cosmos But from the point of view of the created worlds, it is the other way also, viz. the cosmic triad symbolises the three feet of the milch cow of speech, and the fourth one is beyond these worlds. As well-known in the metaphysical cogitations of the Grammarians, the one is the *Parā Vāk*, and the other three are *Paśyantī, Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī* Some times the *Vāk* is described as *trayīmayī dhenu*, having four udders, viz *svāhākāra, vashatkāra, svadhākāra* and *hantakāra* (Śatapatha, 14 8 9 1) According to the Mārkandeya Purāna, the Rishis are sustained by the teat called *vashat*, the Pitṛis by *svadhā*, the Devas by *svāhā*, and men by *hanta* (Mārk, 29 10-11)

Ashtāpadī—The eight-footed cow involves the symbolism of the number 8; e g in RV 1 164 27, the *aghnyā* cow is called *Vasupatnī*, the protector of the eight Vasus, and she comes yearning for her calf which is the manifest form of the Vasus (*hiṁkṛinvatī vasupatnī vasūnām vatsam icchantī manasābhyāgāt* . Here *Vāk* is the cow and Agni (i.e. *Prāni*) is her calf According to RV 10 5 7 , Agni is the

first-born of *Rta* (*agnir hi naḥ prathamajā ritsya*), and in Atharva 8 9 21, Eight Elements are said to be the first born of *Rita* These constitute the Eight Vasus, viz *Manas*, *Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, and *Vāk* or the Five Elements of Matter, which in later ritualistic symbolism are the eight forms of Agni (cf Śatapatha, 6.1 3 18, *tāny etāny ashtau agnirupāni, kumaro navamaḥ*), and in the Purānas the eight *mūrtis* of Śiva (*pañchabhutāni, chandrārkāvātmeti munipungavāh, mūrtayo' shtau śivasyāhur devadevasya dhīmataḥ* Linga Purāna, 2-12-42 cd–43 ab)

Āpah or *Samudrāh*—These are symbolised by Gaurī She is the cow, the mother of infinite creation, converting the primeval waters into milk through being fertilised by the Bull, the Self existent Prajāpati, or Agni Conversion of water into milk is the symbol of motherhood, thus the cosmic cow (*kāmadughā*) fills the whole world with progenitive potency, which in ritualistic terminology is called the rain of *ghrita* (*udid ghritena prithivī vyudyate*, RV 1 164.47), or the gathering of the minute particles of butter (*sambhritam prishad ājyam* RV 10 90 8) The symbolism of butter is patent When tiny globules of butter permeate water, it is transformed into milk Water extinguishes fire, but butter enkindles it, therefore butter is the concrete form of Agni (*etad vā agneḥ priyaṁ dhāma yad ghritam*, Taittirīya Br, 1.1.9.6)

When we refer to *Vāk* as *ashtāpadī*, there is verily a reference to it as identical with Agni, with the Vasus, with Rigveda, etc, an established symbolism at several levels of reference of which the basic conception is that of *ashtāksharā Gāyatrī*

Navapadī—The conception of the nine-footed cow exhausts all the possibilities of numerical manifestation, since 9 is the highest numeral in the series 1, 2, 3,.... .... The nine-syllabled metre is the *Brihatī*. consisting of 36 *aksharas* (*shat-trimśad-aksharā vai brihatī*, Śatapatha Br, 8 3 3 8, Aitareya Br, 2.24) The maximum number of consonants that can be tagged to the utterence of one vowel is nine That indicates the maximum limit of manifestation, *navo navo bhavati jāyamānaḥ*, RV X 58 19). The commentators understand by it the eight quarters of space including the intermediate regions, with the Sun as the ninth (*upari digapekshayā sūryena vā navadigadhishthānā*, Sāyana), or the eight manifest forms, besides the ninth which is unmanifest as being beyond all attributes (*ashtamūrtinirguna vishayatvāt*, Ātmānand). So does Gaurī become omniform In ritualistic terms, *navapadī* corresponds to *navāha*, which is the model of a year (*navāho vai saṁvatsarasya pratimā*, Shadvimśa Br, 3 12) Each day as a unit of time is a complete specimen of the *Samvatsara*, which is the symbol of Sūrya and all the movements associated with it The *Navāha Yajña* is a model of the *Samvatsara Yajña*

Sahasrāksharā:—The speech that exists in *parame vyoman*, i. e. *paramākāśa*, the undifferentiated transcendent 'space' is the *Parā Vāk*. It comprises a thousand syllables. *Sahasra* in eqivalent to *sarvam* (Śatpatha Br. 4.6 1 15), *bhūmā* (Śatpatha 3 3 3 8), and *paramam* (Tāndya, 16 9 2), the highest entity transcending all the categories of manifestation. *Akshara* is a syllable, an irreducible ultimate impartible unit of speech, which is the symbol of motion or pulsation, since all speech is visible activity against the substratum of silence. *Akshara* is flowing (*viksharana*, RV. 1. 164. 42) of the Oceanic Waters that existed in the beginning. When the reference is to *sahasrāksharā*, it is the uncreated entity that becomes manifested as the created Akshara or the Universe as a result of *rajas*. Here are postulated a higher and a lower entity, both being the two aspects of the same Reality, be it named as Word, Purusha, Prajāpati, Satya, Jyotis, Hiranyagarbha, etc the first and the fundamental principle of the cosmic order grasped as the "Imperishable Being". It is that comprehensive transcendent, vast and tremendously effective first cause that orders into existence the cosmos—the ultimate that is behind and beyond creation. The *sahasraksharā* is equivalent to the *sahasraśirshā Purusha*, which is the highest source of creation as both *asat* and *sat*, being unmanifest and coextensive with all the categories of the manifestd words.

Where does the infinite Akshara exist? The finite syllables, i e all sounds originate from *ākāśa* or ether, which is the medium of word. The seers postulated for the *sahasrāksharā Vāk* as her ultimate source a *paramākāśa* or *parama vyoma*, both *Vāk* and *Vyoma* being closely associated or being identical as *guna* and *bhūta*.

Parama Vyoma—The idea of the highest entity as *ākāśa* elaborated in the famous dialogue of Yājñavalkya and Gārgī (Brihad Ār. Up 3 6) existed in the Rigveda in the form of *paramam vyoma* (RV 1 164. 34). Manifest *Vāk* originates from *vyoma* or *ākāśa*, which is the most subtle of the five material elements. The quest therefore was for an ultimate source whose primacy stood above all, i e the *Parama Vyoma*, and it was declared that the latter was the same as Brahman (*brahmāyam vācaḥ paramam vyoma*, RV. 1 164 35), who is identical with *Vāk* (*Vāg vai brahma*, Aitareya, 6 3, Śatpatha, 2 1 4 10), and also four-footed like her (*tad etachchatushpād brahma* Chhāndogya Up. 3 18 2, also *so' yamātmā chatushpāt*, Māṇḍūkya Up 2). As Yājñavalkya explains to Gārgī that the basic support of even *ākāśa* is *Akshara*, the uncreated and completely transcendent reality, so does Rigveda identify *parama Vyoma* with *Akshara*, wherein are stationed all the Richas and all the Gods (*richo akshare parame vyoman yasmin devā adhi viśve nisheduḥ*, RV 1 164. 39).

7. SUPARṆA (सुपर्ण)

Suparṇa is a significant term in the Rigveda. Literally Suparṇa is one with a good or strong wing A wing is not single but a pair to aid in the flight. This duality is the basic idea in designating Prajāpati as Suparṇa (*Prajāpatir vai suparṇo garutmān*, SB. VI 7 2 6). Even in the Rigveda Suparṇa is besides Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Yama, Mātariśvan, a name given to the One Divinity in its diverse manifest (*bahudha*) forms (Rv I. 164, 46)

Why should Prajāpati or the Creator be called Suparṇa ? It is because he is the archetype of the basal dichotomy or duality of the created worlds. The One (*Tad ekam*) existed in the beginning , He becomes the Many in creation So Prajāpati *in principio* (*agre*) was concealed in the embryo (*Prajāpatiś charati garbhe*) as the Unborn One (*antar ajāyamānaḥ*) and in manifestation He takes many forms (*bahudhā vijāyate*) This twofold nature of Prajāpati is much elaborated in the Brāhmanas (*Ubhayam vetat Prajāpatir niruktaś chāniruktaś ch parimitaś chāparimitaś cha*, SB. VI, 5 3, 7). Creation implies the separation of the two principles inherent in Prajāpati, which constitute his two selves as the duality of the cosmos. Agni and Soma, Manas and Vāk are some of the conjoint forms of Prajāpati amidst a string of other names and concepts.

Pārna, "Wing", signifies rhythmic motion, the same as *Pāda* and *Chakra*. Flight is the result of the rhythmic movement of the wings of a bird, and provides the most appropriate analogy to the cosmic movement released by Prajāpati in his creation This movement is symbolised by Time or the Year *Saṁvatsara*, which is designated as the Great Bird :

Atha ha vā esha mahāsuparṇa eva yat saṁvatsaraḥ, tasya yat purastād vishuvataḥ shanmāsān upayanti so' nyataraḥ paksho' tha yat shaḍuparishṭād so' anyatara ātmā vishuvān, SB, XII, 2 3. 7).

'But, indeed, that year is a great eagle the six months which they perform prior to the Vishuvat are the one wing, and those which they perform subsequent thereto are the other, and the Vishuvat is the body: and, indeed, where the body is there are also the wings, and, where the wings are there is also the body.' (Eggeling, SB , V, p. 158).

Saṁvatsara is a unit of time which revolves for eve in a cyclic movement, the *uttarāyana* and *dakshiṇāyana* being likened to its wings. Sūrya is identified as

Suparṇa, for the Sun-God is the symbol of relative time which is the focal centre of all movements in creation .

> *Vi suparṇo antarikshāṇy akhyad gabhīravepā asuraḥ sunīthaḥ*
> *kve 3 dānīm sūryaḥ kaś ciketa katamāṁ dyām raśmir asyā tatāna* (I 35 7)

'He, strong of wing, hath lighted up the regions, deep quivering Asura, the gentle Leader.

Where now is Sūrya, where is one to tell us to what celestial sphere his ray hath wandered?' (Griffith)

The symbolism of the Sun is vast and varied It is spoken of as the Cow, the Bull, the Horse, the Boar, the Bird, etc. It is called the Golden Bird (*Hari Haṁsa*) :

> *Sahasrāhnyaṁ viyatāvasya pakshau harer haṁsasya patataḥ svargam* (Av X 8 18)

Suparṇa as the Sun is *Hari Haṁsa*, also called *Hiraṇyapaksha śakuni* :

> *Yaḥ sahasrasave sattre jajñe viśvasṛijām ṛishiḥ*
> *Hiraṇyapakshaḥ śakuniḥ tasmai haṁsātmane namaḥ*
> (Śānti-parvan, 47. 30)

The cosmos is said to be a sacrificial session lasting for a thousand pressings of the Gods and the Golden-pinioned Bird that is the Sun has spread out its wings for a coeval flight to the heavens 'A thousand days' stands for a thousand years (*etāvān vai saṁvatsaro yad ahorātre* KB. XVII. 5). One aeon (*kalpa*) makes one day of Brahmā and He as Prajāpati represents the principle of stasis (*sthiti*) underlying all kinds of motion (*gati*) in the created worlds.

The flight of the Celestial Bird stands for cosmic pulsation which is marked by a superb rhythm called *Chhandas* Cosmisation is rhythmisation Thus Vishṇu, the deity distinguished *par excellence* for striding (*vikramaṇa*) and in three steps comprehending the whole universe both in time and space (*Yasyorushu trishu vikramaṇeshu adhikshiyanti bhuvanāni viśvā*, RV. I 154 2), is said to have Garuḍa as his vehicle The spatial conceptions are an unfolding of the time factor, and both time and space are identified as the Sun-god, whose golden chariot is spoken of as mapping out the entire regions of space (*hiraṇyayena savitā rathena devo yāti bhuvānani paśyan*, RV. I. 35. 2). Suparṇa or Garuḍa is identified with *Chhandas* :

> छन्दोमयेन गरुडेन समुह्यमानश्चक्रायुधोऽभ्यागमदाशु यतो गजेन्द्रः
> (Bhāgavata, VIII. 3. 31).

Vishnu's Garutmā Suparna symbolises the cosmic rhythm., and is the same as his disc, *Chakra*—the Wheel which also stands for revolving movement regulated both in time and space Vishnu appears both as having a cosmic form (*brihach-chharīraḥ*, RV I 155 6). He measures out the worlds by his expanding steps, both in the microcosm as *Vāmana* and in the macrocosm as *Virāt* (*sa hi vaishnavo yad vāmanaḥ*, SB V. 2 5 4). This movement is his *Chakra*, round wheel based on a central *Svastika* comprising four inclinations or angles of ninety degrees each

Chaturbhih sākam navatim cha nāmabhiś chakram na vrittam (RV. I 155 6)

The round wheel has its ascending and descending nodes (*udgrābha, nigrābha*), which in revolution compare to the flapping avian wings in flight.

Suparna is identified with semen virile, *vīrya* or *retaḥ* (SB VI 7-2-6) and the same is true both of the seed that creates life in men and animals and plants, and of the cosmic germ called *pratna reta* or *bhuvanasya reta* (RV I 164 36) which initiates cosmic motion inherent in the minutest particle and the biggest stars.

Suparna as the Sun-god is also called Patanga and identified as the symbol of Life or Prāna which manifests itself as the most mysterious force pulsating or throbbing rhythmically in each organism and also its minutest constituent cell:

Ekaḥ suparṇaḥ sa samudra āviveśa sa idaṁ viśvam bhuvanaṁ vichashṭe (RV. X 114 4).

'A Suparna has entered the Ocean He looks round and views this universal world'

Here Purusha is the ocean (*purusho vai samudraḥ*, JUB III 35 5) and Suparna is Prāna or the Life principle (*prāno vai patañgaḥ*, JUB. III, 35. 2). Prāna in Vedic symbolism is identical with Agni and Sūrya Its abode on the plane of manifestation is the body (Purusha), because of which it is also called (*nri-shad*, RV IV, 40 5) explained by the Śatapatha as the Baphometic Fire called Life (*prāṇo vai nrishadagnis tam etadāha*, SB VI, 7. 3 11)

The nature of Prāṇa is essentially the same as the folding and unfolding of the wings by a bird :

Prāno vai samañchana-prasāraṇam (SB VIII, 1 4, 10)

'The process of contraction and expansion or rhythmic pulsation is the nature of Life' In the Agni chayana ceremony the chief Fire-altar, the Uttaravedi is constructed with 10,800 bricks in the shape of a Suparna with outspread wings, and there it represents the Universe and is identified with Agni himself (Griffith, White Yajurveda, Book XI, footnote). Agni is the presiding deity of the High Altar, Agni

is Prajāpati himself and the Altar, the Universe or the body in which Prajāpati has become manifest and resides Agni, Prajāpati and the Uttaravedi are looked upon as identical entities, and their common nature is said to be the same as that of Prāna or Suparna, viz a two-fold movement or dual motion marked by 'coming and going' (*eti cha preti cha*), or by 'forward and backward impelling' (*sam chāñcha pra cha sāraya*, Yajurveda, 27 45)

Creation and dissolution, manifestation and disappearance, rising and setting, life and death are like the two wings of the Suparna as Universe or as its Creator, or as its Life-spirit which are one and the same 'Prajāpati obtained this Universe as his great possession by coming among mén on earth as archetypal' (*prathamachchhad-avarān āviveśa*, RV X 81 1) The archetype is omnipresent, controlling and regulating all forms according to his own original model As Maker and Disposer his is the most lofty presence everywhere and for ever (RV X 82 2) The essential nature of manifest Prajāpati is rhythmic motion with which He holds earth and heaven by the manipulating of his two arms or by the flapping of his wings on the two sides (*sam bāhubhyām dhamati sam patatrair dyāvā bhūmī janayan deva ekaḥ*, RV X 81. 3)

Earth and Heaven represent the cosmic parents, the two generating forces, the male and the female, the positive and the negative, whom Prajāpati at first sunders apart as the pair of opposite principles out of his single body, and whom again he must weld together to keep the creation going Earth symbolises the material or mortal body and Heaven the immortal spirit The former is called Bhūta or Asura and the latter Prāna or Deva Life or consciousness is a marriage between the two. Thus rightly it is said in addressing Agni, the symbol of the invisible immortal Essence:

Suparṇo'si garutmān prishthe prithivyāh sīda (Yajur , XVII 72).

'Thou art a Bird with goodly wings. be seated on this high spot of earth. This formula is uttered at the time of laying down the fire on the Uttaravedi built in the form of a bird with outspread wings, viz Suparna chiti.

The conception of Suparna chiti relates all the created organisms in which life becomes manifest. Each body is conceived of as the Suparna-chiti, Altar for Agni-Prajāpati-Suparna to stay therein That is *śarīra* so called where the Vital Airs reside (from the root *śri*, to take shelter , *atha yat sarvasminn-aśrayanta tasmād u śarīram*, SB VI 1. 1. 4)

The physical body consists of two portions, the upper or the head, and the lower or the trunk and extremities. Both are the abode of the Prānas or Vital

Airs, but the upper contains the immortal essence of all the Vital Airs that abide in the lower and thus the head controls and integrates the activities of the rest of the body. The head which is the seat of the Madhya Prāṇa is the Suparṇa and the lower body the Suparṇa-chiti.

This disposition is further elaborated by dividing the lower body into seven parts, the seven fold division being called Sapta-Purusha. This provides a basic outline of the physical structure underlying each bodily frame. It is not to be taken as an anatomical reality, but a hypothetical mapping of the vital functions which provide the nucleus for the gross structure. Thus each organism has a dynamic centre on the manifest plane and at the same time a static point which is the root of its subtle existence in the unmanifest. The latter is called *pratishthā* or *sthiti* or *ūrdhva*, or *avyakta*, corresponding to the *puchchha* of the Suparṇa. The central focus which is the source of all the manifest vital functioning is the heart of a Svastika or Chakra comprising four angles of 90° each. The point is called *nābhi* and the four divisions round it the quadruplicate *ātmā*. To the latter are attached two framing extremeties, one on each side corresponding to the two wings of a bird. (See SB VI 1 1 4 6, *sa vai sapta purusho bhavati sapta-purusho ayaṁ purusho yach-chatvāra ātmā trayah paksha-puchchhāni*)

This seven-fold structure is the Suparṇa-chiti, and the life-sap in it is called *Chityāgni*. Whatever excellence, whatever life-sap there is in these seven persons, that they concentrate above, that is Prajāpati's head (SB VI 1. 7). The head is called *Chite-nidheya*, the seat of immortal life-essence which is symbolised by the gods :

'On that same (head) all the gods are dependent' (*tad asyaitach chhiras tasminnetasmin sarve devāh śritāḥ*, SB. VI 1 1 7)

In fact, the head represents heaven which is the seat of the thinking and willing faculties or light (*svargo jyotishā vritah*). But earth and sky, bust and head are relative symbols , the main emphasis in framing these definitions was always the distinction between matter and consciousness or Bhūta and Prāṇa. Each earth or gross material manifestation is a limited mortal phenomenon which has its invariable counterpart in an unmanifest, infinite and immortal essence which is constantly coming into contact with the former and sustaining its life-sap. The latter is symbolised as Soma, Madhu, Amṛita, Svarga, Dyauh, Śyena, Suparṇa, Indra, etc., The earth, Suparṇa-chiti or the seven-fold structure within it is a mere container or receptacle for the storage of Soma or Life-elixir which is the mead of heaven. This celestial ambrosial element is the food of gods and essential for the maintenance

of life and vitality The rhythmic inter-relation between the material body and the vital force is pictured as the diving of the heavenly Suparṇa with the trophy of Soma and scattering its contents all over the earth Indeed the rising Sun as the Suparna is doing it daily with his rays (*udyan sūryo martyebhyo amṛitan raśmibhiḥ ātanoti*)

The main exploit of Suparna is the carrying off of the heavenly Soma and depositing that jar on the ridge of the earth (*Somāharaṇa*) This is the theme of the Suparna legend (Suparna Saga), a very elaborate and grand version of which is incorporated in the Ādi parvan of the Mbh (chs 18 30, Poona ed) In his irresistible flight Garuda transports a mighty branch (*mahāśākhā*) of the cosmic Rohina tree, to which cling the sixty-thousand Bālakhilya sages There is no doubt that this grand Bough is a limb of the cosmic Tree of Existence, which is the same as the Universe. For each such Branch, comprising five parts (*pañcha-parvā*), viz the Unmanifest (Svayambhū, Avyakta), the Universal (Parameshthī Mahat), the Sun (Sūrya), the Mid-Region (Antariksha) and the Earth (Prithivī), there is essentially present a Garutmā Suparṇa who is the source of its motion and vibration. The Sun as the centre of its solar system is such a Suparna , the year is its manifest symbol, viz the dynamic element of Time and therefore termed as the Suparṇa or Mahāsuparṇa. The Great Eagle held in its tight clutches an elephant and a tortoise (*etam āsthāya śākhām tvam khā lemau gaja-kachchhapau, Ādi. 25 32*), the elephant symbolising the Mahat and the tortoise the Dyāvā Pṛithivī expanse (*dyāvā-pṛithivyo hi kūrmaḥ*, SB. VII. 5 1. 10).

The principal motif in the Suparna legend is the eternal feud between Garuda and Nāgas Garuda as Sūrya stands for the powers of light and immortality, the celestial Devas, and the Nāgas stand for the powers of darkness and death, the chthonic Asuras. It is the same motif as the Vedic Daivāsuram, the conflict between the Angels and the Titans of which the Indra-Vṛitra conflict is archetypal Just as the final victory belongs to Indra, so Garuda ultimately triumphs over the Nāgas. The theme supplied a favourite decorative motif in Indian art and has been treated with remarkable success in Mathura sculpture (J P Vogel, *Indian Serpent-Lore*, p 172, pl XV(c)) We have another sculpture from Sanghao in Peshawar district in which the Suparna motif seems to have been at the root. It shows a Nāgī in the clutches ef the giant-bird Suparna (ibid , pl. XV(a)). Dr. Vogel and others have taken it to be 'an Indian adaptation of a master-piece of Leochares representing Ganymede carried off by the eagle of Zeus' (ibid p 41) Ganymede in Greek mythology was a beautiful youth of Phyrgia and was taken up to heaven by Jupiter, or as some say, by his eagle. Jupiter or Zeus Pater (Dyaush-pitar) represents the presiding deity of heaven, and Nāgī is the subterranean spirit of the earth , the former is the immortal essence or cosmic consciousness which comes to reside in the material

sheath of the body The one is the Yajña and the other the Bhūta-chiti, or Nārāyaṇa versus the Earth whom he rescues from the abyss It is the irresistible siezure of the latter by the former that is implied in the union of the two. It is the elemental welding of the immortal and the mortal that is variously celebrated in the legend of the Bhū Devī becoming consort of Vishnu and typifying the eternal pull between Earth and Heaven, the bride and the bridegroom

To take another imagery, we find the symbolism of the quail being swallowed by the wolf (*Vṛikasya chid vartikām antarāsyād*, RV X 39 13), or in its later version, the quail siezed by the might of the Suparna (*grastām suparnasya balena vartikām*, Ādi-parvan, 3. 62, also Renou, L' Hymne aux Aśvin de L' Adiparvan, A Volume of Eastern and Indian Studies presented to Prof F W. Thomas, p. 178) Here also the quail stands for the individual consciousness on earth and Suparna the mighty immortal essence symbolised by the Sun or more correctly the Supernal Sun which stands for Brahman.

In this context we are reminded of the Trisuparna conception of Vedic literature underlying the legend of the carrying off of *amrita* or Soma from heaven by the three birds which were the three metres (Cf Atharvaveda, *Trayah Suparnā uparasya māyū nākasya prishṭhe adhi vishṭapi śritāh*, XVIII 4 4) A detailed version of the Trisuparna legend is preserved in the Aitareya and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas (AB III 25 27, SB III 6 2 1-26, also III. 2 4 1, Taittirīya Samhitā VI 1 6 1-6, Maitrayanī Samhitā III 7. 8. Suparnī and Kadrū are clearly explained as the symbols of heaven and earth respectively (*iyam vai Kadrūr asau Suparnī* TS. VI 1 6 1), and the sons of Suparnī, viz. the Sauparneyas represent the metres (*Chhandāmsi sauparneyāh* ibid) Creation is typified as Dyāvā-pṛithivī, which are the two parts of the single mundane egg, always kept apart but in perpetual mutual union as the Universal Parents Heaven is the immortal counterpart of gross matter or the five elements typified as the earth Soma is the cosmic life principle, i e the Universal consciousness which is the welling fountain of honey or Soma (*madhva utsah*, RV I X 154)

How the mead of heaven may be brought to the plane of matter is the real eternal problem of creation? The three metres symbolise the basic triad of creation, and as three Suparnas stand for Vāk, Prāna and Manas i e Matter, Life and Mind.

1. Vāk (= Five Bhūtas)—Matter—Gāyatrī
2. Prāna (= Prāna-Apāna)—Life or Vital Airs—Trishtup.
3. Manas (= Samjñā)—Mind—Jagatī

The principles of Life and Mind were the active associates of Gāyatrī in bringing Soma down to the manifest world (cf SB. III 2. 4 3 11, TS. VI 1. 7 2)

The metres were produced from Vāk (*vāchaḥ prajātani chhandāmsi*, SB. III 3 1. 1) Vāk symbolises all the five elements, or gross matter, because *ākāśa* is the most subtle of them and *śabda* or *vāk* as its attribute stands for all

The functioning of the above cosmic triad as an integrated triune principle of universal coherence both in time and space depends essentially on the vibration of Prāna-Apāna, which is a forward and backward movement There are several terms to express this rhythmic pulsation, e g 'Thou art Aditi, the double headed Be thou for us successful in going forward and successful in coming back When he says, 'Be thou for us successful in going forward', he means to say,' Come back to us with Soma' (S'B III 2 4 17, *sā naḥ suprāchī supratīchī edhīti*) This two-fold oscillating movement is also referred to as *eti-preti* (comes and goes) and *samañchanī-prasāranī* (Yajurveda, XXVII 45, SB VIII 1 4 10; also RV X. 189 2, *antaś charati rochanāsya prānā lapānatī*) This is at the root of the legend of the heavenly Soma brought through the intervention of the Three Suparnas, viz. Jagatī, Trishtup and Gāyatrī The Suparnas or Sauparneyas belong to a single chant or cosmic rhythm and are spoken of as metres. Gāyatrī is the chant or messenger of earth, Trishtup of mid-region, and Jagatī of heaven The immortal and invisible life essence is ordained to descend from the plane of "heaven" to that of "earth", and therefore it is only Gāyatrī which succeeds in making Soma travel from the celestial abode to earthly destination

These two forces are but aspects of a single intrinsic power inherent in Nature Infinite Nature is the Great Mother (*Mahī Mātā*), the Cosmic Cow (*Viśva-rūpā Gauh*), also called Aditi, the Mother of Gods She is double-headed (*ubhayata sīrshnī* SB III 2 4. 16), with the negative and positive poles, or earth and heaven. The ascent and descent, or anode and cathode in relation to a single current or flow of power are merely relative terms, illusory and not real (*māyā*), just as stated about Kadrū and Suparnī: 'Now Soma was in the sky, and the gods were here on earth. The gods desired —'Would that Soma came to us: we might sacrifice with him, when come? They created these two illusions Suparnī and Kadrū' (*te ete māye asrijanta Suparnīm cha Kadrūm cha*, SB III 2 1 1)

The two creative forces of Nature are inter-related, one of them does not and cannot leave the other This is what is meant by the heavenly Suparna siezing with its might the quail on earth (*grastān suparnasya balena vartikām*, Ādi-parvan, 3 62). Life is a ceaseless throbbing or pulsation between mind and matter which may be compared to two Birds of mighty power (*vrishṇā suparnā*, RV. X. 114. 3)

8. NĀSADĪYA SŪKTA (नासदीयसूक्त)

1. *Sadasad-vāda*—The Nāsadīya Sūkta gives this doctrine the first position. In the beginning there existed the Asat and from it proceeded the Sat This was the view of the Taittirīyas In the Rigveda itself both Asat and Sat are said to have existed in the Parama Vyoma i e. the Empyrean or the highest heaven which was the abode of the Gods and from which both Aditi and Daksha were born—

असच्च सच्च परमे व्योमन् दक्षस्य जन्मन्नदितेरुपस्थे । अग्निर्ह् न. प्रथमजा ऋतस्य पूर्वं आयुनि वृषभश्च धेनु ॥
(Rig. X 5 7)

We may also compare here the statement made in Rik X 72 2-3, (देवाना पूर्व्ये युगेऽसत. सदजायत) In the Śatapatha Asat is explained as the Rishi-creation or Prāna-srishti (VI. 1 1. 1)* The terms Sat and Asat were differently understood in the various schools of philosophy Here the gross material creation is said to be Sat and the preceding stage of Energy is termed Asat Others said that Brahman is Sat and Pradhāna or Prakriti is Asat. Subtle discussion over their relative priority as shown by Pandit Ojha in his *Daśavatārarahasya* resulted in the elaboration of seven diverse points of view which subsequently were expanded to twenty-one

2 *Rajovāda*—Rajas is the primeval material cause of the cosmos (आरम्भणं तत्त्वमिहोच्यते रज.) It is said in the Rigveda that in the beginning there existed the One Unborn (एकं, अज.) referring to the absolute Brahman and from him were produced the six Rajāmsi which were all supported by that One (वि यस्तस्तम्भ षडिमा रजास्यजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम्, I 164 6)

These are also known as *Shadurvīḥ*, the 'Six Expanded Ones' (षडुर्वीरेकमिद् बृहत्, X. 14 16, also X 128 5 Others believe that Rajas is the same as Loka and there are seven Lokas, viz, भूर्भुव॰ स्व. मह. जन. तप: सत्यम्. These are also termed as the Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space, Activity and Consciousness Others speak of Rajas as being twofold, viz, Śukla-Rajas and Krishna Rajas which repsesent the basal dichotomy of the cosmos and revolve in a circle as the dynamic pulsating forces of creation—

अहश्च कृष्णमहरर्जुनं च वि वर्तेते रजसी वेद्याभि । वैश्वानरो जायमानो न राजा ऽवातिरज्ज्योतिषाग्निस्तमांसि ॥
(Rig VI 9 1.)

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* असद्वाऽइदमग्रऽआसीत् । तदाहु. किं तदसदासीदित्यृषयो वाव तेऽग्रेऽसदासीत्तदाहुः के तऽऋषय इति प्राणा वाऽऋषयः ।

It is said elsewhere in the Rigveda that the black and the white represent the variant Pair of Twin Beauties: One of the two is dark, and bright shines the other These two originate from a common parental source and are Sisters Mighty is God supreme and sole power which is capable of such miraculous manifestation—

नाना चक्राते यम्या ३ वपूंषि तयोरन्यद् रोचते कृष्णमन्यत् । श्यावी च यदरुपी च स्वसारौ महद् देवानामसुरत्वमेकम् ॥
(Rig III 55 11)

Rajas represents the principle of Motion (गति) as against the principle of Rest or Stasis (स्थिति). Whereas Aja is the same as the Avyaya Purusha, Rajas corresponds to the Akshara Purusha The doctrine of Akshara was quite well known to the seers of the Rigveda where it is stated that the primeval ocean of infinite energy transforms itself into this material creation through the agency of Akshara—

तस्या. समुद्राः अधि वि क्षरन्ति तेन जीवन्ति प्रदिशश्चतस्रः । ततः क्षरत्यक्षरं तद् विश्वमुप जीवति ॥
(Rig I 164 42)

Cosmic pulsation is expressing itself in the universal rythmic movement of expansion and contraction and the same is designated as Prāna in Vedic terminology, as stated in the Śatapatha—

प्राणो वै समंचनप्रसारणम् (Śat. VIII 1 4.10).

Controlled rythmic beat or throb is the nature of Prāna and the same is equivalent to the life-principle manifest in different forms Prāṇa is a dual principle like Rajas, expressing itself as the pair of Prāṇa and Apāna. As it is said, the supreme light of the universe manifests itself in an expiring and inspiring movement known as Prānana-Apānana—

अन्तश्चरति रोचनाऽस्य प्राणादपानती । व्यख्यन्महिषो दिवम् (Rig. X 189 2).

When the two opposite poles of Energy or Rajas become established and an uninterrupted oscillating movement starts between the two then only light begins to shine in its sphere and the principle of Darkness or riotous energy symbolized as *Mahisha* keeps out of that orbit Rajovāda was an important metaphysical doctrine of the Rigveda which later became identified with and merged into the theory of Kāla or Time

3 *Vyoma-vāda*—The ultimate changeless and eternal source of the cosmos is known as the Parama-Vyoma. That is immortal and beyond modification It is also called Indra or Nabhya-Prajāpati that remains unborn (अन्तरजायमानः). Its

opposite principle is Apara Vyoma representing the creational aspect of the cosmos This is subject to change and all kinds of modification and therefore is regarded as mortal Ākāśa (Space) is its first material manifestation and the five gross elements are gradually produced from it. The Amṛita-vyoma is the birth-place of the Devas and the Martya-vyoma that of the Bhūtas. The doctrine of Vāk is intimately connected with that of Vyoma In the Empyrean (परमेव्योमन्), Vāk is said to be immortal (अमृता वाक्) and to be constituted of 'a thousand syllables' (सहस्राक्षरा परमे व्योमन्, Rig I. 164. 41). That which is Sahasra is infinite and universal, undifferentiated and unaffected by the conception of arithmetical numbers That which is Vyoma is the same as Ākāśa and the attribute of Ākāśa is Śabda or Speech consisting of syllables

4. *Apara-vāda*—Para and Apara are relative conceptions, the Absolute being concieved as Para and the Immanent as Apara This Pair of Higher and Lower is also designated as Ūrdhva and Adhah The centre is the Para and the circumference the Apara. The Cosmic Tree is said to have its roots in the Ūrdhva, that is the Higher Essence and its branches ramify in all directions of the space called Adhah The relative conception of Para and Apara was of the widest application in the Vedic metaphysical lucubrations Vyoma, Vāk, Prajāpati, Kāla, all these were conceived of as belonging to a higher and lower order, the higher corresponding to the stage *ab intra* (अन्तरजायमान) and the lower to the stage of manifestation (बहुधा विजायते). The seed and the tree, the primeval germ and the manifest body are examples of Para and Apara

5. *Avarana-vāda*—The line of Nāsadīya Sūkta referring to this doctrine reads—

किमावरीव. कुह कस्य शर्मन् (Rig X 129. 1)

Creation is governed by the principle of Finitisation The Infinite is cast in a finite mould for the purpose of becoming manifest That which is made concrete and material assumes a finite shape This is the doctrine of Āvarana A significant term for it is Māyā The power that measures out all created things is Māyā. Indra as the presiding diety of Parama Vyoma assumes diverse forms through his Māyā

रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।
इन्द्रो मायाभि. पुरुरूप ईयते युक्ता ह्यस्य हरय शता दश ॥ (Rig VI 47 18).

All creation is measuring out, which is usually expressed by one or the other derivatives of the root मा, to measure, and generally expressed as *Vimāna* This measuring out takes place through the agency of Rajas or motion and is

threefold or operative at three different levels of reference (त्रिधातु Rig III, 26 7), i e, Mind, Life and Matter

The principle of Envelopment is important for creativity It determines the depth and dimensions of the projected creation Each created object comprises a Dyāvā-Pṛthivī, i e the parental pair of Heaven and Earth. The Dyāvā-Prithivī conception is the most vital and basic to the whole idea of Vedic cosmogony in which the Earth symbolizes the material basis and Heaven is the symbol of all that is its unmanifest immortal source Many a beautiful hymn of the Rigveda is devoted to the glorification of this Parental Pair. Anything to become manifest must descend to the level of Matter, spoken of as Earth or Mother The word Mātā literally signifies that which measures. The womb of the Mother determines all the possibilities of existence inherent in each created object The Father coincides with the infinite immortal source, but the Mother represents its mortal and finite counterpart. The Mother is truly the container of what she creates That is her true nature, viz serving as a mould or Āvarana. The Nāsadīya Sūkta gives a synonym to this as Śarma, viz, Shelter. Each covering is virtually a protection That which envelopes serves as a shelter to the object enveloped From this point of view we may understand why in the Brāhmanas Śarma is equated with Charma or the Cutaneous principle which appears as the covering of each living object It it said that the skin of the black antelope is called Charma in ordinary human speech but is virtually a Śarma so far as it represents the divine principle of protection; for the black antelope is the symbol of Yajña and the latter enshrines Agni or the overall principle of Life (शर्म चर्म वा एतत्कृष्णस्य (मृगस्य) तन्मानुषं, शर्म देवत्रा, Śat III 2 1 8) Śarma = Charma = Āvarana represents the truly cryptic esoteric style of the Brāhmaṇas. In the Puranic terminology it is the same as the Gaja-kṛitti worn by Śiva at the beginning of his Tāndava Dance, where the elephant is the symbol of Ahaṅkāra or individual manifestation.

6 *Ambhovāda*—The Ambhovāda was an important Vedic doctrine in which the Waters were conceived as the primeval source of all creation. Ambhas, Āpah Salilam, Samudrah, Ritam, all these were regarded more or less as synonymous concepts and described with great elaboration in the mantras of the Rigveda. All creation proceeds from the infinite ocean of Varuna who is the presiding deity of Waters The region of Varuna is that of darkness, i. e of the absence of manifestation It is also spoken of as the dark descent (कृष्णं नियानं, Rig I. 164. 47). The Waters represent the principle of Rest in which Matter existed in a state of equilibrium and as an amorphus mass Out of that unmanifest state of darkness and

static inertia proceeds the principle of Motion and Light which is symbolized as Agni This doctrine is repeated many times in the Rigveda that the Waters as the primeval Mother gave birth to Agni The Rigvedic seer formulates this significant enquiry —

परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्या परो देवेभिरसुरैर्यदस्ति । क स्विद्गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवा समपश्यन्त विश्वे ॥
तमिद्गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवाः समगच्छन्त विश्वे । अजस्य नाभावध्येकमर्पितं यस्मिन् विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्थुः ॥
(Rig X. 82 5-6).

Agni was the first child of the Waters as its Mother The Waters were the same as Ritam or Parameshthī, the universal principle and source of creation. Agni is spoken of as Apāmgarbhah (Rig, III 5. 3) According to the Rigveda VII, 49, 4 Vaiśvānara Agni had its abode in the Waters (वैश्वानरो यास्वग्नि प्रविष्टस्ताआपो देवीरिह-मामवन्तु) Agni as the enkindling principle in the cosmos is spoken of as the Primeval Heat (अग्रज तपस्, बृहद्देवता, II 53) The Aranyaka-parvan refers to it as the temperature (ऊष्मा) and the Maitrāyanī Upanishad referring to the doctrine of the Divine Heat (दैवौष्ण्यं) mentions that this heat is generated by the clashing forces of expansion and contraction known as उपांशु and अन्तर्याम and that the Purusha is the same as Agni (यदौष्ण्यं स पुरुषः । अथ य. पुरुष सोग्निर्वैश्वानर, मैत्रायणी उपनिषद् II. 6) It is stated that the Gods discovered beautiful Agni hidden in the Waters—

अविन्दन्नु दर्शतमप्स्वन्तर्देवासो अग्निमपसि स्वसॄणाम् (Rig III 1 3)

In the Rigveda Agni is explicitly stated to be the first-born of Rita which signifies the cosmic order as expressed in the form of the channels through which Water or Energy is flowing (अग्निर्ह न. प्रथमजा ऋतस्य, Rig X 5 7)

It may be stated that the sub-stratum of Rita or Āpah or Ambhah represents the principle of Soma, and Agni is its opposite principle All creation is spoken of as the manifestation of the interaction between Agni and Soma (अग्नीषोमात्मकं जगत्). Animal life with blood, vitality and spirit is produced and sustained by the interaction of Agni and Soma (अग्नीषोमीय पशु) which is tied to each sacrificial stake The sub-stratum of Waters is conceived as a lake (सरस्) from which Sarasvatī or Vāk symbolizing the principle of Matter flows forth in a thousand forms.

Agni, the enkindled divinity, is the same as Indra, which the Śatapatha Brāhmana derives esoterically from the root 'indh', 'to burn', that which is 'Indha' becomes Indra in the cryptic speech (स योऽयं मध्ये प्राण । एप एवेन्द्रस्तानेष प्राणान्मध्यत इन्द्रियेणैन्द्ध यदेन्द्ध तस्मादिन्ध इन्धो ह वै तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते परोक्षम्, VI 1. 1 2) In Vedic terminology the following bunch of coincident meanings should be borne in mind

अग्नि—इन्द्र—सूर्य—मनु—अहं—यज्ञ—अमृत—देव—अक्षर—काल—हिरण्यगर्भ—प्रजापति—सत्य—प्राण—ज्योतिः—पिता—अहः—संवत्सर

They point to the same phenomenon, viz. the principle of Agni born from the pre-existent and infinite ocean of Waters. The principle of Soma has also its coincident series, viz ऋत—आप.—अम्भः —सलिल—समुद्र—वरुण—असुर—अहि—वृत्र—मृत्यु—अगान —पृथिवी—माता—रात्रि—तम, etc. A correct appreciation of their symbolism throws light on many stanzas of the Rigveda

7. *Amrita Mritu vāda*—Amṛita and Mṛitu are inherent in the creative process of the cosmos. Immortality is the principle of rest or stasis, and mortality is motion or change

अमृत मृत्युरिति द्वयमेतद्विश्वस्य मूलमिति विद्यात् ।
अविनाशी स्थितिलक्षणममृत गतिमान् विनश्वरो मृत्यु ॥
(पं मधुसूदन ओझा, दशवादरहस्य, p 15)

The Devas represent Amṛita and the Bhūtas Mrityu, and Agni is connected with both as the देवाग्नि and भूताग्नि, the former in the sun and the latter in the earth (भूतानि मृत्योरमृताच्च देवास्तेपूभयेष्वग्निरयं निविष्ट, ibid p. 16) In other words अमृत is called रस and मृत्यु is called बल—

रसो बलं चेत्यमृतं च मृत्यू रसप्रधानान्यमृतानि स्युर्याम् ।
बलप्रधानास्त्विह मृत्यव स्युर्न मृत्यव सन्त्यमृतातिरेकात् ॥
(पं मधुसूदन ओझा, दशवादरहस्य)

अन्तर मृत्योरमृतं मृत्यावमृतमाहितम् ।
मृत्युर्विवस्वन्तं वस्ते मृत्योरात्मा विवस्वति ॥ (शतपथ १०।५।२।४)

Birth is immortality and death is Mṛityu. Both of these are found in the Sun as Mārtānda, whom Aditi, the mother of Gods, brought forth 'to spring to life and die again'

प्रजायै मृत्यवे त्वत्पुनर्मार्ताण्डमाभरत् । (Rig X 72 9).

प्रजा (= जन्म), मृत्यु (= मरण) are the component halves of the same circle, they constitute the cyclic wheel of time

8 *Ahorātra-vāda*—This was the same doctrine as the Kāla-vāda to which reference is found in the Svetāśvatara Up. (I 2, काल स्वभावो नियतिर्यदृच्छा etc) Also,

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदु । रात्रि युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जना ॥ (Gita 8. 17)

A thousand yugas constitute a day of Brahmā and a similar duration his night Day means creation and night stands for dissolution Ahorātra is the unit of time and pregnant with all its power It is Saṁvatsara itself pushing with dynamic force the earth to revolve round the Sun on a fixed orbit. The Sun in the centre is Prajāpati, he is the Horse that imparts movement to everything

Ahorātra is very often spoken of as the Ahah or Day of which the black and the white are two halves अहश्च कृष्णमहरर्जुनं च (Rig. VI. 9 1). The one presses the other to move on and on and revolve in a cycle As a result of this equal distribution of light and darkness the Vaiśvānara Agni as the life in the Purusha and the Sun in the solar system is sustained and kindled for ever Light and darkness, black and white, Agni and Soma, creation and dissolution, birth and death, heaven and earth—these are the varied manifestations of Ahorātra The tremendous force behind creation is Kāla, and this doctrine is found in its fully elaboroted meta-physical form in the Atharvaveda (Kānda XIX, Sūktas 53-54)

इमं च लोकं परमं च लोकं पुण्याश्च लोकान् विधृतीश्च पुण्या ।
सर्वाल्लोकानभिजित्य ब्रह्मणा काल. स ईयते परमो नु देवः ॥

(Atharva. XIX, 54. 5)

As Pt Ojha has explained रात्रि is the substratum and real substance (प्रकृति) and अहः is its modification

रात्रि. पुरस्ताद् तदहस्तु पश्चादह परस्तात् स्वयमेव रात्रि' ।
विकारतोऽह. प्रकृतिस्तु रात्रि सैषा गतिः सा प्रभव. प्रतिष्ठा ॥

रात्रि symbolises the principle of Rest and अह that of Motion , रात्रि is sleep (निद्रा) and अह. is the awakening of the world-force (जागरण) which is styled as क्षोभ in the Purānas Vishnu, the deity of the cosmos sleeps or rests on the substratum of the infinite force called Ananta or Śesha, the Remainder

Vishnu represents the finite universe and the cosmic serpent is the symbol of Infinity In the terminology of the Pañcharātra Bhāgavatas, Mārkandeya represents the principle of Time He is coeval in time with creation, and the latter is a sacrificial session of a thousand years and so is Rishi Mārkandeya destined to live for a thousand years (सहस्रायु) When Vishnu or the Divine Creator awakes from his abode in the Infinite Ocean (एकार्णव), it is the sage Mārkandeya, who first comes out of the restful body of Nārāyana, and creation starts What is intended to be said is that the dynamic element of Time is the root cause of cosmic pulsation Nārāyana is identical with Sūrya or Savitā, and the comprehensive coincidence of its connotation is explained in the Maitrāyanī Upanishad (VI 8) as आत्मा, ईशान, शंभु, भव, रुद्र, प्रजापति, विश्वसृज्, हिरण्यगर्भ, सत्य, प्राण, हंस, शास्ता, विष्णु, नारायण, अर्क, सविता, धाता, विधाता, सम्राट्, इन्द्र, इन्दु ।

All these enter the orbit of meaning associated with अहः as a metaphysical doctrine of the Rigveda.

9. *Daiva-vāda*— The doctrine of the Devas as cosmic creators is fundamental to Rigvedic thought The emergence of the Gods is the point where Yajña starts The cosmos is one continuous sacrifice in which Agni is always present He is invoked as यज्ञस्य देवन् Rig I 1 1) and is the symbolic embodiment of all the Gods (अग्नि. सर्वा देवता, एतरेय २.३, तैत्तिरीय I 4 4 10, सर्वदेवत्योऽग्नि, शतपथ VI 1. 2 28) Where Agni is, there all other Gods must be present (स देवाँ एह वक्षति, Rig I. 1 2) In the Dākshāyanī Sūkta of the Rigveda (X 72) we find a profound disquisition regarding the birth of Gods and their relation to Aditi or Infinite Nature The latter is the mother of eight sons (अष्टौ पुत्रासो अदिते) and they include the Seven Ādityas and the eighth Mārtāṇḍa or the yonder Sun born of the Golden Egg whom Aditi raised to undergo the cyclic process of life and death (प्रजायै मृत्यवे त्वत् पुनर्मार्तण्डमाभरत्). For material creation Mṛityu is an essential factor, without it there would be no rhythm and no further movement

As to the number and nature of Gods, there was a point of view that Agni and Soma are two essential divinities, Agni creates the Devas (Energy) and Soma creates the Bhūtas (Material Elements) Agni is one but assumes a triple form, and is therefore variously spoken of as त्र्यम्बक (son of three mothers), or त्रिमाता (Rig. III 56 5) and त्रिमूर्धा (three-headed, RV I 146 1) There are three high stations of Agni's birth all rooted in सत्य or the firm nucleus of Yajña ·

त्रिरस्य ता परमा सन्ति सत्या स्पार्हा देवस्य जनिमान्यग्ने. (Rig IV. 1. 7)

The first truth of Agni's birth is Mind, the second Life and the third Matter. They are respectively known as ब्रह्माग्नि (= स्वयम्भू), देवाग्नि (= सूर्य) and भूताग्नि (= पृथिवी). In between these three levels, are the twin principles of Soma which keep the three Fires burning Agni and Deva are identical principles, viz energy in its active manifest form Where there is Deva, there is light, immortality, order and truth. The opposite of Deva is Asura, the symbol of darkness, death, disorder and devilry. The Asura as darkness precedes the Deva and was therefore sometimes called पूर्वदेव. From one mighty Asura's dominion were produced the Devas of definite names and forms

महद् देवानामसुरत्वमेकम् ।

In each यज्ञ-मंडल, the Single Deva (एको देव) occupies the centre, the Thirty-three Devas lend their functioning power to the diameter विष्कम्भ बल, and the Ninety-nine Asuras cluster all round the circumference परिधि बल The diameter is देव and the circumference is असुर and that is why the latter are thrice as numerous as the former. The Asuras are not permitted to enter into the holy Yajña-maṇḍala protected by the

mantra-power Thus the देववाद school was of far-reaching connotation and importance in the Vedic times

10 *Samśaya-vāda*—This was the school of sceptics who asked about the universe such questions as Whence ? When ? Where ? How ? What size ? What form ? Diverse were the answers formulated, but doubt found expression in such utterances :

न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानान्यद्युष्माकमन्तरं बभूव ।
नीहारेण प्रावृता जल्प्या चासुतृप उक्थशासश्चरन्ति ॥ (Ṛig X 82 7)

'You will not find him who produced these creatures something different has entered your hearts

'People now have beclouded minds and stammering lips, and given to worldly enjoyments, they merely have become chanters of hymns '

In the Nāsadīya Sūkta itself we find sceptic utterances in their boldest form

'Who verily knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and whence comes this creation ? The Gods are later than this world's production Who knows then whence it first came into being ?' It is finally stated that even the Creator who presides over this universe in the highest heaven knows its origin or does not know it—cannot be affirmed positively. Such is the great mystery Everything here is a big sign of interrogation—a Great Question (संप्रश्न), the answer to which no one knows

Besides these ten points of view there were other cosmogonic doctrines also and they were being put forward not in the spirit of contradiction but as probable explanations of the universe Sometimes even single words were followed to their logical conclusion, for example, the symbology of the Cow, or the Horse, or the One-Footed Goat (अज एकपाद्), or the Dragon of the Deep (अहिर्बुध्न्य) or the Dawn, or the two Aśvins, or the Great Mother (महीमाता) by whom was always intended Aditi, the Mother of the Gods Such symbols are too numerous to mention but they are regarded as offering some cogent explanation of the cosmic process Indeed the comprehension of Rigvedic mythology depends on a correct appreciation of the meaning of the symbols which the Vedic seers employed as the vehicle of their thought and which language by common consent became the norm for the formulation of the Mantras One who understands the significance of the symbols employed in the Rigveda can do justice to the thought embodied in it. There is a complete and consistent metaphysical system in the utterances of the Rishis and that key holds the secret of Vedic exegesis

Brahman is Reality or Essence, who without undergoing any modification becomes the sub-stratum and the effective cause of creation. He is One and at the same time Many. The main root is बृह् to expand or to become many. As in the spring season the trees and the creepers are loaded with fresh leaves and flowers which sprout from their inherent sap or essence, so is the cosmos born out of the essence of Brahman. Like the waves of tidal flood on the surface of the ocean creation is due to the quality of manifestation inherent in Brahman.

All the created objects show a twofold attribute, viz. that they are subject to constant change and secondly that they retain their identity. The first thing is the principle of Motion and the second that of permanency and Rest. The first is बल and the second is रस. If the created objects reveal this twofold character their ultimate cause, i. e., Brahman assuredly partakes of this duality.

The trinitarian doctrine of the Three Purushas called Avyaya, Akshara, and Kshara is inculcated in the Vedas and elaborated in the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgītā. Avyaya is the highest Purusha and sub stratum of all. It is the Supreme Essence in which all things are unified (परेऽव्यये सर्व एकीभवन्ति). Prāna or the vital being is Akshara which is responsible for all kinds of activity and motion. The gross material elements or the Pañcha-bhūtas are called Kshara. As the Gītā says—

द्वाविमौ पुरुषो लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षर सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ (Gītā XV, 16)

Matter is Kshara because it is subject to decay and disintegration. The energy within the material elements is Akshara.

The Vedic terms for these three are a little different. We have two sets of terms. In the first set *Avyaya* is *Para*, *Akshara* is *Parāvara*, and *Kshara* is *Avara*, i. e., the three Persons are conceived of as the Higher, the Middle One, and the Lower One. In the more ancient terminology the Avyaya Purusha was known as अज and एकं, and since अज is spoken of as एकपाद् or अपाद् i. e., the One-Footed or the Footless One, the idea was that अज was devoid of any motion and represented the principle of Absolute Static Rest.

The Vedic word for Akshara Purusha was Rajas and Creation is spoken of as the measuring out of the possibilities of existence under the power and force of Rajas.

The third principle, viz., the Kshara Purusha is in the Rigveda called Vāk. Vāk is the designation of the Pañcha-bhūtas or the Five Elements of Matter. The genesis of the term is simple. In the course of manifestation the more subtle

substances are gradually transformed into the less subtle There are three planes of manifestation, viz Mind (मनस्), Life (प्राण) and Matter (वाक् or पंचभूत) Ākāśa is the foremost of the five elements and also the most subtle one Its attribute is Śabda or Vāk and therefore Vāk was accepted as the symbol of all the five material elements

This was the Vedic conception of the three Purushas and all creation was regarded as Tripursha-sṛishti. It is the three states of consciousness that are implied here, viz, जाग्रत्, स्वप्न and सुषुप्ति. One which is gross is encased within the other which is more subtle We come across here a graded system of psychological depths which enter the constitution of each human being This exposition of the Vedic Trinity corresponds essentially to the metaphysical triad of Indian philosophy, viz, सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् of the ancient Sāṅkhya philosophers. This is the same as the three Devas in the Purānas, viz, Vishnu, Brahmā and Śiva The three ritualistic Fires, the three Gunas, the three Vedas and the three Devas are but divergent expressions of one and the same triadic doctrine distinguished by a cosmic coherence of the highest value—

एत एव त्रयो वेदा एत एव त्रयोऽग्नय ।
एत एव त्रयो देवा एत एव त्रयो गुणा ॥

Many other Trika parallelisms were derived from the basic conception of the Vedic Trinity

The Avyaya Purusha is constituted of five sheaths or पचकोष, viz आनन्द, विज्ञान, मन, प्राण, वाक् which are elaborated in the Taittirīya Upanishad The Akshara Purusha is constituted of the Pañcha prānas and the Kshara Purusha of the Pañcha bhūtas The Kshara is the material cause (उपादान or आरम्भण), the Akshara is the efficient cause (निमित्त कारण or प्रभण) and the Avyaya Purusha is the substratum (आलम्बन)

The Nāsadīya Sūkta does not content itself by merely recounting the various points of view, it makes a solid contribution by offering its own solution to the cosmogonic problem agitating the thinkers of that age It makes the following statements —

1 The ultimate cause of the world is तत्, styled as एकम्, the One and the only One without a second The epithet तत् is in contradistinction to एतत् or इदं सर्वम् for the world.

2 That एकम् was transcendent and above all, viz परात्पर, which is the essential meaning of तस्माद्धान्यन्न पर. किंचनास (none other was, nor aught there-beyond) This परात्पर is the same as called निर्विशेष and निर्धर्मक.

3. That Transcendent Brahman for the sake of creation breathed (आनीत्), i e it was distinguished by its inherent power which is 'Breath' (प्राणन). It is the same which later references speak of as निश्वसित and which is equivalent to the principle called त्रयीविद्या or वेद, or ऋषि, or in the words of the Śatapatha the असत् प्राण

4. This प्राणन depended not on any external factor like air (अवातं), but was entirely due to the intrinsic power (स्वधा) of Brahman This स्वधा is a mystery, its obscure nature is beyond explanation or utterance and it exists in Him by his own right. As expressed further in the hymn the principle of स्वधा is of a lower order (अवस्तात्), being the cause of material creation and associated with the Pitṛis

5 In that *ab intra* state (अग्रे) Dark-Inert (तमस्) was hid by Dark-Inert (तमस्) The two entities referred to as तमस् i e Svayambhū (the self-existent Father-principle) and Parameshṭhī (his emanation, the Mother principle). In the Gītā the स्वयम्भू is called बीजप्रद पिता and the परमेष्ठी the महद् ब्रह्म or योनि. Both represent the parental pair prior to the creation of द्यावा-पृथिवी, which is the parental pair on the plan of manifestation

6 The cosmos was hid in the depth of सलिलम्. This is a term which as explained above was synonymous with अम्भस, आप, समुद्र, महार्णव. or the एकार्णव of the Purānas इदं सर्वं refers to the created world (cf ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं), which did exist in its subtle state as hidden under the depth of the sea The principle of आप. denotes diffused matter existing in a state of equilibrium and rest The cosmos (इदं सर्वं) existed then as an inscrutable watery mass, still unformed into any real shape (अप्रकेतं).

7 तुच्छ्येनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत्—Both तुच्छ्य and आभु are technical terms तुच्छ्य is void or spatial cavity i e the cosmos, आभु is that which pervades on all sides (आ समन्ताद् भवतीति) and denotes Brahman itself. There can be no creation unless आभु is in some part affected by the principle of तुच्छ्य, or limitation, which implies the creation of a मंडल, that is a shell or coating with a void within it The तुच्छ्य, is the same as अभ्व (भूत्वा न भवतीति), i e a यक्ष, phantom or ghost, which is merely an appearance and nothing in reality So is the world, and the three Lokas are but manifestations of Name and Form, which are called अभ्व and यक्ष--

ब्रह्म वाऽइदमग्रऽआसीत्। ...अथ ब्रह्मैव परार्धमगच्छत्। तत्परार्धं गत्वैक्षत कथं न्विमाँल्लोकान् प्रत्यवेयामिति। तद् द्वाभ्यामेव प्रत्यवैद् रूपेण चैव नाम्ना च। ते हैते ब्रह्मणो महती अभ्वे। ते हैते ब्रह्मणो महती यक्षे। (शत० ११।२।३।१-५)

The cosmos or the नाम-रूप as तुच्छय--अभ्व--यक्ष represents the महिमा of पुरुष, but पुरुष is mighter than all this seeming greatness—

एतावानस्य महिमाऽतो ज्यायाश्च पुरुष. (ऋ० १०।६०।३)

8 तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम्—एकम् here refers to the principle of individuation, i e the individual centres which came into existence as so many universes. Each universe is a यज्ञ, and the aggregate of all the universes is also a यज्ञ The यज्ञ is spoken of as the नाभि or centre of organised activity—

पृच्छामि यत्र भुवनस्य नाभिः । ऋ० १।१६४।३४
अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभि ॥ ऋ० १।१६४।३५

"Where is the centre of the world, I ask thee"

"This यज्ञ is the world's centre".

नाभि, हृदय, उक्थ, ऊर्ध्वं, क, गर्भ, मध्य—all these point to the centre of the universe or the created organism. This is एकम्, the one which becomes many in the extension of its diameter and the *mandula* or its circumference This एकम् is that यक्ष which is born of heat or तपस्—

महद् यक्षं भुवनस्य मध्ये तपसि क्रान्तं सलिलस्य पृष्ठे ।

On the surface of सलिल i e आपः, diffused primordial matter, the यक्ष i e नाम-रूप (Name-Form relata) makes its appearance by the power of तपस्, i e अग्नि or heat or temperature gives rise to movement, activity or pulsation

The particular portion of आभु that was shadowed by तुच्छय, generates within itself the temperature of heat which brings into being the individual centres manifesting as the Sun in the midst of each system सूर्य is the manifest form of intense तपस्, the enkindled power called इन्ध, i e esoterically इन्द्र. The mutual realtionship of यत् and तत् is noteworthy In contrast to the vast mightiness of Brahman, the created world is but a very minute portion of Him (cf एकांशेन स्थितो जगत्)

9. मनस्—That one Individuating Phenomenon is known as the Mind (मनस्) ; the same as अहंकार, the Consciousness or Ego It is variously known as संज्ञा, चिति, संवित्, स्मृति, etc. In the यज्ञ terminology मनस्तत्त्व is called यजमान, or दीक्षित, or ब्राह्मण, or होत्री, or मनु, i e. the presiding spirit of each सप्तहोतृ यज्ञ—

येभ्यो होत्रा प्रथमामायेजे मनु· समिद्धाग्निर्मनसा सप्त होतृभिः ।

(Rig X. 63. 7)

मनु is मनस्, also called अग्नि, or इन्द्र, or प्राण, or प्रजापति, or शाश्वत ब्रह्म, because of its समिन्धन or बृंहण

10. काम--The enkindling of अग्नि or इन्द्र or the conciousness of mind is the same as काम, the principle of desire. It is the primeval seed of life and creation appearing in each individual centre or यज्ञ, or सूर्य. It is the same as विज्ञान, or संज्ञा, the wife of the Sun-god and daughter of त्वष्टा.

11. When we speak of मनस्, we should always remember its source in the हृदय. As already pointed out, हृदय, नाभि, गर्भ, उक्थ, मध्य all signify the centre which is unmanifest (अव्यक्त) and मनस् is its manifest power मनस् is एजद् and हृदय is ध्रुव (I 164 30), मनस् is मर्त्य and हृदय its अमृत cause. मनस् or consciousness is the norm of life, of which हृदय is the hidden mysterious source .

कवीयमान. क इह प्रवोचत् देवं मन कुतो अधि प्रजातम् । (I 164 18)

Who the poet here could tell of the source of the god-like Mind ? Mind is no ordinary thing, it is God Himself. In the शिवसंकल्प सूक्त of the यजुर्वेद, मनस् is called हृत्प्रतिष्ठ, i e the mind is established in the हृदय, and the same is implied here in the words हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा.

12 What did the poets discover by the power of their thought was the kinship of the material creation (सतो बन्धुम्) in the असत् or प्राण सृष्टि of the preceding order These particular meanings of सत् and असत् have been explained above under सदसद्वाद and in the शतपथ VI 1.1.1 (ऋषयो वाव ते अग्रे असत्'' के ते ऋषय इति प्राणा वा ऋषय: The kinship of Matter with Energy is the basic knowledge and top secret of the consmogonic science It may seem contradictory but it is there—the Bhūtas have emanated from the Devas.

13. Next comes a strange cogitation of the Seer. With an introvert mind he thinks loudly—

अध स्विदासी ३ दुपरि स्विदासी ३ त् ।

The source of the Sat seems at times rooted below, at times emanating from above Here अध: is the material world, and उपरि is ऊर्ध्व or Brahman. The principle of Life, Mind and Matter, i e of the created universe with its triadic coherence, is attributed by some to the manifest process and by others to a mystery The truth lies somewhere between the two, as the ray that costitutes this creative process is neither from above nor from below, but an oblique manifestation (तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेषा). Its source and end are both unknown and unknowable. It is analogous to the birth of Indra from the oblique side of his mother —

तिरश्चता पार्श्वान्निर्गमाणि, (Rig IV 18 2).

In the Matsya Purāna it is stated :

वामं विदार्य निष्क्रान्तः सुतो देव्याः पुन: शिशु ।

The same is said of विष्णु in the देवीभागवत that विष्णु was born from the oblique side of क्षुद्र विराट् (बभूव पाता विष्णुश्च क्षुद्रस्य वामपार्श्वतः, Devī Bh IX. 3 59). Similar was the birth of the Buddha from the oblique side of his mother

The meaning of these is that the source of Life is not contiguous either in the manifest or the unmanifest If is were so it could be traced It is like the diving of a sky-soaring eagle, an intrusion from an oblique direction and hence nobody knows whence it comes or where it goes

14. The two principles essential for birth are the parental pair comprising Father and Mother. The Father is the रेतोधा and the Mother is the महिमान. The रेतोधा is the same as बीजप्रद पिता (Gītā, 14, 4) and महिमान is the same as महद् ब्रह्म or योनि (मम योनिर्महद् ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम्, Gītā, 14. 3) On the plane of the unmanifested creation (मानसी सृष्टि) they are styled as स्वयम्भू and परमेष्ठी, and on the plane of manifest creation, द्यावा-पृथिवी. A two-fold parental pair is essential for tha creation of Agni who is therefore called 'twice-born' (द्विजन्मा, I 194, 4) The two births are on the plane of energy and matter, the first one is called higher (परस्तात्) and the second one lower (अवस्तात्).

15. प्रयति—The highest entity is called प्रयति (प्रयतिः परस्तात्), which is elsewhere also styled as the संयती लोक or the region of तपस् and सत्य i e. the मनस्तत्त्व of स्वयम्भू or the Father.

16. स्वधा—It is comparatively of lower potentiality, belonging to the वाक् or material plane of परमेष्ठी, the Mother Principle स्वधा is associated with the Pitṛis, and identical with विराज् conceived of as the female potentiality of परमेष्ठी and identibal with महत् and योनि According to Manu, the first-born are the Rishis and they in turn give birth to the Pitṛis :

ऋषिभ्यः पितरो जाताः पितृभ्यो देवमानवाः । देवेभ्यस्तु जगत् सर्वं चरं स्थाण्वनु पूर्वश ॥ (Manu, 3 201)

ऋषि corresponds to स्वयम्भू, पितरः to परमेष्ठी, देव to सूर्य and मानव to पृथिवी. The Rishi-creation is असत् and of देवs is सत्. With the Rishis are dove-tailed the Pitṛis representing the principle of स्वधा or the crystalisation of material particles, which further on in the देव सृष्टि become organised into a यज्ञ or ordered system

17. When thinking of the two relative factors of प्रयति and स्वधा, viz the higher controlling energy and the lower material order subject to it, the Rishi thinks of the several aspects of differentiated energy called the Gods This was the doctrine of देववाद and considered insufficient in itself as the ultimate cause of

creation, अर्वाग देवा अस्य विसर्जनेन, i. e. when स्वयम्भू and परमेष्ठी, viz the अव्यक्त पुरुष and महान् as its opposite counterpart have already appeared as the first parents of creation, then appear the देवा as the presiding spirit of यज्ञ, which commences in the region of सूर्यं सूर्यं is यज्ञनारायण, there is no regular यज्ञ prior to the creation of सूर्यं. In fact the सप्तहोतृ यज्ञ comprised of 'Seven Threads" (सप्त तन्तुs) begins in सूर्यं, the सप्त तन्तुs being Mind, Life and the Five Elements of Matter called मन, प्राण and पंचभूतs (or वाक्) respectively In सूर्यं we witness the spectacle of the clash between the Angels and Titans (दैवासुरम्), the former led by इन्द्र and the latter by वृत्र, who is keen to enter the orb of the Sun-god (सूर्यं मण्डल) and overpower its presiding deity Indra but which it cannot do.

18. Finally in enunciating the First Principle, the Seer mentions the अध्यक्ष of this creation as its source, and this is no other than Brahman—

इयं विसृष्टिर्यत आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्ष. परमे व्योमन् सो अंग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ (Rig X 129. 7)

In uppermost Empyrean (परमेव्योमन्) is the निर्गुण ब्रह्मन्, beyond all categories of Time and Space, and He the Supreme Godhead has created all this (इदं सर्वं) by His intrinsic power.

Brahma-vāda was thus the metaphysical doctrine of the Ṛgveda :

किस्विद् वनं क उ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षु ।
मनीषीणो मनसा पृच्छतेदु तद् यदध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥ (Rig. X. 81. 4)

The 'Forest' is the परात्पर ब्रह्मन् (cf तस्माद्धान्यन्न पर. किंचनास), infinite and beyond all creation. The 'Tree' in it is the अव्यय, from which are fashioned the many universes. Each universe again is like a branch (बल्श) of that Avyaya, Aśvattha. The Forest, the Tree and the Branch all are of one and the same Essence, viz, Brahman :

ब्रह्म तद्वनं ब्रह्म स उ वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः ।
मनीषिणो मनसा विब्रवीमि वो ब्रह्माध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥

(तैत्तिरीय ब्राह्मण, २।८।९)

The Nāsadīya Sūkta thus presents a profound statement of the ancient cosmological formulation. Its esoteric meaning and consistency are patent in the seven *mantras* that make up the hymn

नासदीय सूक्त

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानी नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
किमावरीव. कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भ. किमासीद् गहनं गभीरम् ॥ १ ॥

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्न आसीत्प्रकेत ।
आनीदवात स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न पर कि चनास ॥ २ ॥

तम आसीत्तमसा गूह्ळमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छ्येनाभ्वपिहितं यदासोत्तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ॥ ३ ॥

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेत. प्रथम यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ॥ ४ ॥

तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेपामधः स्विदासी३दुपरि स्विदासी३त् ।
रेतोधा आसन्महिमान आसन्त्स्वधा अवस्तात्प्रयति परस्तात् ॥ ५ ॥

को अद्धा वेद क इह प्र वोचत्कुत आजाता कुत इय विसृष्टि. ।
अर्वाग्देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आबभूव ॥ ६ ॥

इयं विसृष्टिर्यंत आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्ष. परमे व्योमन्त्सो अङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ ७ ॥ ऋग्वेद X, 129.

9 THE RIDDLES OF ṚISHI VASUKRA

Rigveda, X 27-29, are three hymns of the seer Vasukra Griffith says about X. 27, 'The hymn is enigmatical and difficult in the highest degree, and neither Sāyana nor later scholars have succeeded in making it intelligible throughout' This obscurity is no wonder since in the hymn itself it is stated that the statements are in the form of riddles, e g, 'Resolve for me, O singer, this my riddle', and in reply the Rishi says, 'How shall I solve this riddle, I, the simple, declare the thought of thee the Wise and Mighty ?' (X. 28, 4-5)

In fact the hymns 27 and 28 are couched in the language of Vedic symbolism, and once this point of view is grasped and applied tolerable clarity begins to dawn upon the stanzas We shall try to discuss some of them

The Rishi says to Indra that he will prepare for him a vigorous bullock (*amā te tumaram vrishbham pachāni*, X 27 2) and pour the fifteenfold strong juices (*tīvram sutam pañchadaśam nishiñcham*, X 27 2) The Bull is no stranger to Vedic symbology In X 31 8 it is called *Ukshā* and identified with Sūrya or the Sun-god; or it is said that this Bull's most gracious far-extended thought existed in the beginning in full plenitude (*abhavat pūrvyā bhūmanā gauḥ*, X. 31. 6). It is the emergence of Sūrya out of incoherent watery chaos that marks the beginning of cosmic order and creation This is often mentioned 'as the cooking of the Bull' (*ukshāṇam prishnim apachanta vīrāḥ*, I 164. 43), or in this very hymn later on as 'the cooking of the fat Wether' (*pīvānam mesham apachanta vīrāḥ*, X 27. 17) The Sun is called *Ukshā*, the Sprinkler, as it scatters its seed or energy throughout the universe by means of its thousand rays It is often referred to as *Prishni Gauḥ*, the spotted Bull (X 189. 1, and I 164. 43), because according to Rigvedic cosmogony the Sun is said to comprise two kinds of *Rajas*, viz a black and a white one (cf X. 37 3, I 35. 2, VIII. 43 6, VI 9 1, *ahaścha krishnam ahararjunam cha vivartete rajasī*), which stand for the principle of Rest (*krishna, tamas, rātri, nidrā*) and the principle of motion (*arjuna, jyotiḥ, ahaḥ, jāgarana*) respectively *Rajas* is the same as *Akshara* or Motion, and the Sun is the first embodiment of orderly, regulated or rhythmic motion Prior to the creation of the Sun, all motion is riotous, disorderly and conflicting Sūrya is therefore identified with Deva and Yajña, and the state anterior to it, or *ab intra*, is spoken of as Asura, *tamas*, *rātri*, *samudra*, etc. 'Cooking of the Bull' is symbolic of the primordial aggregation of that requisite heat or temperature (*devaushnya*, *Mait Up* 2. 6) out of which millions of Suns were created. That *ūshma* is symbolised as Agni (*ūshmā chaivoshmanaḥ jajñe so'gnir bhūteshu*

lakshyite, Āranyaka-parvan, 211 4), which is identical with the Sun and spoken of as the Bull born of the waters (*atisrishto apām vrishbhah*, Atharva, XVI. 1. 1).

In the same stanza is a reference to the fifteen-fold Soma-juice pressed for Indra Sāyaṇa explains it as the juice of the Soma-plant whose leaves grow during the light half of the month and die away during the dark half This is alright in the ritualistic context, but when Indra is spoken of as the Shodaśin deity *par excellence*, the number 'fifteen' has a different meaning (e g Yajur, VIII. 33-35 where the epithet *Shodaśin* occurs six times for Indra) Indra as the Nabhya Prajāpati becomes manifest in the form of three Lights (*trīni jyotīmshi sachate sa shodaśī*, Yajur, VIII. 36 ; also Atharva, X. 7 40. *sarvāni tasmin jyotīmshi yāni trīni prajāpatau*). The Three Lights or instruments of manifestation are Avyaya Purusha comprised of the five sheaths (*pañcha kosha*), Akshara Purusha of the fivefold Prānas and Kshara Purusha of the five elements of gross matter All manifest objects subsume these fifteen with the unmanifested Prajāpati as the sixteenth forming its nucleus (*shodaśakalam vā idam sarvam, Kaush Br* , VIII). Indra becomes manifest or attains his might and greatness (*mahimā*) by drinking Soma, or life-sap which is thus fifteenfold. Indra is subsequently said to be possessed of full vital vigour *ab intra*, and to grow to it *ab extra* (X. 27 7). In stanza 7, two canopies are said to be wrapped round him who permeates the space to the utmost limit of Rajas (*dve pavaste pari tam na bhūto yo asya pāre rajaso vivesha*, X. 27 7). The highest bounds of Rajas point to the created universe constituted of the six Rajas regions (*shadimā rajāmsi*, I 164 6), and the two canopies (*pavaste*) are Dyāvā-prithivī, the cosmic parents which serve as the two moulds for producing the universal forms The Dyāvā-prithivī parents relate only to the manifested world, i. e only the world of Rajas or Akshara · they do not affect or comprehend that which is beyond the limits of Rajas, viz the Avyaya Purusha or what in the Rigveda is referred to as Aja or Ekam (*ajasya nābhāv-adhyekam arpitam*, X. 82.6 , *ajasya rūpe kimapi svidekam*, I 164. 6).

In verse 8 there is a very obscure and difficult reference, viz the cows wandering with their herdsman and eating the barley of their master (*gāvo yavam prayutā aryo akshan tā apaśyam saha-gopāścharantī*, X. 27. 8) The cows symbolise motion. They were all shut up or restrained in a cave, whence they were released by Indra i e Sūrya and creation started In order to grasp the significance of cows, barley and herdsman let us pay attention to a basic concept of Vedic cosmogony. It is the doctrine of the Five Deities, viz. Prajāpati, his son Parameshthī, his son Indra, and the two sons of Indra viz Agni and Soma who are brothers This is explained at length in the Śatapatha Br. (XI 1 14 20) saying at the end that the

Kāmapra Yajña of Prajāpati, which is this creation, is accomplished by these Five Deities functioning as an integral unity (*tā vā etāh pañcha devatā etena kāmapreṇa yajñenā-yajanta*). The creation is called *Kāmapra* because through it Prajāpati fulfils his desire to become many, and for this purpose he created Kāma in the beginning (*kāmastadagre samavartatādhi manaso retah prathamam yadāsīt*, X 129 4) These five Gods first separated in five bodies, and later by the *Tānūnptra* rite they came together (Taittirīya Saṁ VI 2 2 1) These Five are respectively named as Bṛhaspati, Varuna, Indra, Soma and Agni Another set of names is Svayambhū, Parameshthī, Sūrya, Chandra and Pṛthivī A third alternative designates them as Viśvedevas, Ādityas, Maruts, Rudras and Vasus.

Let us try to understand them more clearly, if possible through a modern explanation. According to René Guénon creation is distinguished as Universal and Individual, the Universal is sub-divided into the Unmanifested and Formless Manifestation, and the Individual into Formal Manifestation with a Subtle state and a Gross state He has summed this up in the following table.

Universal	The Unmanifested	
	Formless Manifestation	
Individual	Formal Manifestation	Subtle state
		Gross state

With this we may easily correlate the Vedic scheme. the Unmanifested corresponds to *Svayambhū*; The Formless Manifestation to *Parameshthī* which literally signifies the Universal, the Individual in Formal Manifestation is our *Dyāvā Pṛithvī*, which in its Subtle state is termed Sūrya (i e. *Dyauḥ* or *Amṛitam*) and in its Gross state as *Pṛithivī* which in fact is the same as the corporeal existence Dyauh or the 'subtle state" stands for all the extra corporeal modalities of individual manifestation, which in Sanskrit are expressed by the significant term *Amṛitam* The linking modality between Heaven and Earth is called *Antariksha*, the Intermediate one

Within these five has Purusha entered for the sake of formal manifestation (*Pañchasvantaḥ purusha āviveśa*, Yajur. XXIII 52) In the Rigveda we have several references to these Five. 'The primeval light dear to Indra (for the sake of manifestation) was shared by these Five Ones' (X, 55 2); or 'Five paces have I risen from Earth' (*pañcha padāni rupo anvaroham*, X, 13 3) In the Viśvakarmā Sukta (X 81), Svayambhū Prajāpati is referred to as *Prathamachchhad*, the archetypal, who has entered all subsequent manifestations (*prathamachchhad-avarān āviveśa*, X, 81. 1), i. e the rest of the four Prajāpatis who are his 'friends' (*sakhibhyaḥ*, X, 81 5) and whom he teaches the great law of sacrifice by his own example.

These Five Deities are divided into two categories, viz Agni and Soma. Svayambhū, Sūrya and Pṛithivī represent the Three Fires, and Parameshthī and Chandra the two Somas (*trayas tapanti prithivīm anūpā dvā bribūkaṁ vahataḥ purīsham,* X, 27 23).

From the point of view of Vedic cosmogony Parameshthī occupies a very important position It is called the *Rita, Rita-sadana, Samudra, Āpaḥ, Asurasya Yoni* (X. 31 6), *Krishna Niyāna* (I 164 47), or the Dark Region of Varuṇa. It is also spoken of as the region of the Cows, i e. *Goshtha* or *Vraja.* But the Cows in this stage are as if shut in a pen, their movement is hampered and self-conflicting These Cows enjoy freedom of movement in the next stage when in formal manifestation the Sun is created whose rays are symbols of well-defined and regulated movement. Sūrya is the herdsman of those cows (*Gopā*) who find themselves free to move about under his direction.

The eating of 'barley' by these cows is rooted in significant symbolism. 'Barley' is sacred to Varuna (*varunyo yavaḥ,* Śatapatha IV 2 I II ; *vāruno yavamayaś-charuḥ,* Śatapatha V 2 4 II), and the eating of barley by the cows points to the world of Parameshṭhī sustaining those creative forces which first appear in the stage of the Universal and subsequently become effective on the plane of individual manifestation, i e. in the Sun or Dyāvā-Pṛithivī. The Master (*arya*) of the Cows is Parameshthī whose food they eat, and the Herdsman is Sūrya with whom they wander With this background in mind the stanza becomes intelligible, and also the question What portion will these kine afford their owner' (*kiyadāsu svapatiś-chhandayāte,* X. 27 7) Parameshthī is the owner of the Cows , he feeds them. But what portion of their milk does he get in return ? The answer to this enigmatical query is that the Universal (Parameshthī) becomes incarnate in the Individual (Sūrya as the centre of each particularised manifestation) ; the latter is in a real sense his son. The cows yield milk for the son , it is the pleasure of the Father that he provides fodder for the kine so that the Son may be sustained with their milk. The Father does not want any portion of the milk for himself, but wishes that the yield of all the cows that are consigned to the care of the herdsman should support his son. This is how the universal life-principle stands in relation to the individual centres of life-manifestation. In Vedic terminology it is the Rita or Soma of Parameshthī that keeps the Fire in the Sun burning for ever.

The cows represent regulated motion or metres (*chhandāṁsi*) All the rhythmic forces make their first appearance in the Sun , in the preceding stage of Parameshthī there is absence of rhythmic pulsation or motion, although there may be abundant haphazard activity The true Yajña starts from Sūrya who is called *Yajña Nārāyana,* and the Devas first obtain their ambrosial drink in this Yajña. Prior to the stage of

Yajña, all existence is chaotic and formless, devoid of any focal centre to regulate the various powers. Therefore Yajña is said to be the focus or navel of the created worlds (*ayam yajño bhuvanasya nābhiḥ*, I 164 35). Sūrya is the symbol of Indra, and Parameshthī that of Varuna, the Great Asura In verse 9, there is a reference to those who eat fodder (*yavasād*) and to those who eat barley (*yavād*), i e to animals and to men. The region of Varuna (*Parmesthīloka*) is conceived of as a jungle with rank vegetation which serves only as the food of kine. In contrast to that the region of Sūrya is like a fertile field (*urvara*) where regular cultivation of corn takes place to supply provender for men. What we call the forest (*kimsvid vanam*, X 31. 7, X. 81 4) symbolises the Universal (*Parameshthī*), and in distinction to it the Tree (*ka u sa vriksha āsa*, X 81. 4) or the measured field stands for the individual manifestation. Varuṇa and Indra are respectively the divinities of the two stages.

Two kinds of animals are distinguished, viz. those that are yoked and those that are yokeless (*yukta* and *ayukta*, X. 29 9) The yoked ones need one who will unbind them, and the yokeless ones need some one to yoke them. The reference is again to the kine under Surya or Indra and Varuna respectively. The Sun is like the central pole or stake (*yūpa*) of a *yajña* to which all creatures are bound, i e. all forces have become integrated (cf *abadhnan purusham paśum*, X 90. 15). But this bondage is only for a limited period, i e. for the duration of life whether it is one hundred years or one aeon. Death inevitably comes to loosen the bonds of life. Life is a cyclic movement, consisting of corporeal manifestation and dissolution. It is truly said that Aditi, the mother of gods, brought forth Mārtāṇḍa or Sūrya to undergo both life and death (*prajāyai mrityave tvat punar mārtandam ābharat*, X. 72 9), otherwise there could not be creation with immortality alone

The cows that are in the sphere of Varuna require to be yoked, i. e the world-order should operate to bring them into the system of *yajña* or the rhythmic movement of time (*samvatsara*) of which the Sun is the manifest symbol—the herdsman for the cows.

The same imagery is extended in stanza 10, stating that the truth behind the purpose of Indra or Sūrya is to bring together men and animals, i. e the herdsmen of Sūrya and the kine of Varuna (*dvipāch cha yach chatushpāt samsrijāni*, X. 27 10). One who obstructs this ordained law, as Vala and Vṛitra did, is doomed to ruin like a weakling woman.

The mutual relationship of the preceding stage of Formless Manifestation (Varuṇa's Dark Deep) and the subsequent stage of Formal manifestation (Indra

or Sūrya) is further brought out in bold relief by the allegory of the Blind Daughter: He whose daughter is blind since birth, does not become wroth with her on this account Which of the two will loose on him his anger—the man who leads her home or he who woos her' (X. 27. 11)? The Blind Daughter (*anakshā duhitā*) is the unmanifested Prakṛiti concealed within the womb of Mahat or Parameshṭhī (Universal) *Aksha, Chakshu, Jāgaraṇa, Kshobha, Srishti Ahaḥ, Śukla Rajas, Jyoti* stand for creation or manifestation. As opposed to these are *Achakshu, Tamas, Rātri, Nidrā, Krishṇa Rajas* symbolising the unmanifested universal, *ab intra* Cosmic consciousness, unless descended to the manifest material level, is conceived of as a blind girl

Parameshthī Prajāpati does not show impatience or anger for the eyeless daughter She is Sūryā, *ante principium* (*agre*). Soma leads her home (*somo vadhūyur abhavat*) and the Twin Aśvins woo her (*aśvināstām ubhā varā*, X 85 9). These signify the material and the forces which make creation possible. Soma and the Aśvins do not show anger towards Prajāpati for wedding to them an eyeless maiden.

The enigmatical style is carried to a heightened pitch in verse 13, stating four things · he swallows with his feet, he eats his opponent; his head he sets with the head of another for the latter's shelter, sitting he smites the one above (X. 27 13). Griffith rightly, explains these phenomena with reference to 'India, as the Sun', but does not introduse clarity with respect to the imagery involved The Sun swallows the Soma or absorbs the watery contents from all over space through his rays His enemy, the Asura, is Darkness which he eats or destroys Sūrya joins his head with the head of each individual and thereby confers protection or life on the latter The meaning is obvious The Sun-god is the centre of immortality (*amṛitasya nābhiḥ*) and the soul of all that moves or is at rest (*sūrya ātmā jagatas tasthushaścha*). He is the symbol of mind, or cosmic consciousness, a portion of which he is transferring to each individual centre.

The Sun is himself at rest (*āsīnaḥ*, X. 27 13), being the immovable centre of his system, but he draws the material for his sustenance from a source which is unmanifest (*ūrdhva*) or beyond, i. e the Soma or Mother-principle in the Parameshthī is constantly coming to Sūrya and preserving its life Sūrya is the immortal counterpart of the material earth, the immortal is pursuing the mortal; the Deva is following the Bhūta We should remember that the physical sun is not to be taken here, but the immortal divine Essence of which this sun is treated as a symbol. The physical sun like our earth has its own divine counterpart, the Supernal Sun.

Of the pair Heaven and Earth, the earth is said to be of a lower order (*nyak*) and lying in a recumbent posture in relation to the Sun. The recumbent position (*uttāna*) is that in which the feet are raised aloft. For the earth to lie in this position implies that she has her connection or roots in the *ūrdhva*, which is synonymous with *avyakta*. Pṛithivī is *mātā*, the measurer or encompasser which determines the *maṇḍala* or circumference in a circle Dyauh is *pitā*, the centre which is the controlling focus of everything in relation to the circle, it is called *svaḥ* (X. 189.1):

Mātā (Mother Principle) = *Purah, Adhaḥ, Paridhi.*

Pitā (Father Principle) = *Svaḥ, Ūrdhva, Kendra*

The two are inseparable and exercise a mutual pull for the sake of procreation. Their inter-dependence is referred to in the *mantra* (*nyaññ-uttānām anveti bhūmim,* X. 27. 13

The Tree of Existence is the subject of stanza 14. It is called vast in size (*bṛihat*), shadowless (*achchhāya*) and leafless (*apalāśa*) The Cosmic Tree is identified with Brahman (*Brahma tad vanam brahma u sa vṛiksha āsa, Taittirīya Br* II 8. 9 6). This is also known as Aśvattha and Vanaspati with a thousand branches (*sahasravalśa,* IX. 5. 10). The epithet 'shadowless' points to that stage of formless manifestation in which there is only the existence of Prāna and not Bhūtas or the gross material elements. The shadow is cast only by the physical body, and the Devas having only a Prānic existence do not cast their shadows Svayambhū and Parameshṭhī represent the unmanifested stage of the universal and both are therefore designated as *tamas* in which there can be no shadow (*tama āsīt tamasā gūlhamagre,* X. 129 3). The epithet *Apalāśa,* i. e. absence of leaves has reference to the same unmanifest state. The leaves are compared to metres (*chhandāmsi yasya parnāmi, Bhagavad-Gītā,* 15.1) which symbolise rhythmic motion, and the same belongs only to the stage of formal manifestation.

'The Mother stands, the Youngling, loosed, is feeding (*tasthau mātā vishito atti garbhaḥ,* X 27.14) The mother is the symbol of Parameshṭhī which has several other names, e g *Mahat Brahma, Asurasya yoniḥ, Rita sadana* (cf *mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbham dadhāmy-aham, Bhag Gītā,* 14.3) As explained above, Paramesṭhī stands for stasis (*sthiti*) or absence of regulated motion (*gati-nivritti*) Sūrya is the offspring free to move and as the embodiment of Devas feed on *amritam* or the immortal essence. The 'Universal' conceals manifest creation in its womb (*yoni*), it is the place of Darkness or night, i e. Rest and Sleep (*tasthau mātā*) and the Sun represents Awakening, Day, Creation, Manifestation, or Motion.

'Loud doth the cow low, licking another's Calf. In what world hath the Cow laid down her udder' (*anyasyā vatsam rihatī mimāya kayā bhuvā nidadhe dhenur ūdhaḥ*, X. 27. 14)? Here there is a reference to two Cows. Sūrya is the offspring of the first, but the second licks or nurses him. The first Cow is Aditi, as Griffith has rightly interpreted her. Aditi is Infinite Nature, Universal Mother in her undifferentiated form, also designated as *Magna Mater*, the Great Mother (*Mahī Mātā*, V. 47. 1; also VIII. 25.3 where Aditi is called *Ritāvarī Mātā Mahī*). She is the symbol of all the created worlds, millions and billions of universes, each one of which is presided over and nurtured by a youthful daughter of the Grandmother Aditi, as referred to in V. 47. 1. The Great Mother urging heaven towards manifestation and uttering significant speech (*prayuñjatī diva eti bruvāṇā*) comes and awakens her Daughter. The youthful Maiden with the power of her thought takes a home to which she invites the Fathers (*āvivāsantī yuvatir manīshā pitṛibhya ā sadane johuvānā*). The old Granny is changeless and eternal, in her there are no waves of passion to create, she symbolises the ever-lasting Life-principle. But her young Daughter (*yuvati*) has a mind affected by inrushing procreative passion and naturally she must plan to settle in a home (*āvivāsantī*). The Sun as Āditya is the son of Aditi, the Great Mother, but he is the Calf whom the youthful Daughter should lick and suckle with her milk. Each Sun is the centre of a universe, and the energy which creates each differentiated universe is symbolised by a young Daughter.

The Great Mother performs a two-fold duty: she urges heaven to action and she utters a sound. Heaven (*Dyauḥ*) is the symbol of Dyāvā-Pṛithivī, the unit of each created world, which comes into existence at the instance of mother Aditi. Aditi is the navel of *amṛita*, the centre or source of the immortal essence called Prāṇa or Deva (*amṛitasya nābhiḥ*, VIII, 101. 15), whence she is remembered as the Mother of Gods (*tām devā anvajāyanta bhadrā amṛita-bandhavaḥ*, X, 72. 5).

The Speech of Aditi is Vāk. As *Ākāśa* is the foremost and most subtle of the Five Elements, its attribute *Śabda* or *Vāk* is taken to be the symbol of gross material elements or Matter. One of the chief features of each created world or Dyāvā-Pṛithivī unit is the amount of matter which is comprehended in it. This *matter* is the milk of the Youthful Daughter which she produces when she begets. In the imagery of the Cow milk is the same as her udder (*ūdhas*). The source of this milk in the cosmic Cow, is the infinite ocean of Soma in the Universal or Parameshṭhī. Soma is 'food', as against Agni which is energy. The watery Soma is converted into milk by the chemistry of the cow's body, and that is the plan of Nature for the definite purpose of nurturing the calf. The calf or the child is the symbol of the life-principle which in each generation or birth becomes revivified

and renewed with all the preceding possibilities of existence. This explains the reference to the two Cows in the *mantra*, and points to the fact that the milk in the udder of the second Cow is intended for suckling the calf, viz Sūrya born of the first one The doctrine of Vāk and its identity with the Cow symbol is too big a question to be treated in the space available here. Suffice it to say that Vāk is associated with all the five stages of manifestation enumerated above, as Svayambhū (*Satyā Vāk*), Parameshthī (*Āmbhriṇī-Sarasvatī Vāk*), Sūrya (*Brihatī Vāk*), Chandra (*Subrahmanyā Vāk*) and Prithivī (*Anushṭup Vāk*) Āmbhṛṇi is identical with Meaning and Sarasvatī with Word. Both co-exist in the unmanifest state in Parameshthī, but it is Sarasvatī Vāk that assumes the form of letters and words and is most effective in Sūrya It is this Vāk as the Cow which is attached to Sūrya as her Calf Indra or Sūrya is *amritā vāk* and Indrapatnī is *martyā vāk* or Pṛithivī

In verse 15, there is a very obscure reference to numbers, 7, 8, 9, 10: Seven heroes came from the south, eight from the north, nine from the west and ten from the east (X. 27. 15) Sāyana takes seven as the Rishis, eight as the Bālakhilyas, nine as the Bhrigus, and ten as the Angirases, but he is uncertain as to what is really ment

These numbers seem to refer to the Prāṇas or Devas, which are the same thing, who congregate round Indra from the four sides, describing a *maṇḍala* or Svastika for him Each fulcrum or centre conceals within its womb a Svastika or round wheel of four right angles (*chaturbhih sākam navatim cha nāmabhiḥ chakram na vrittam*, I 155. 6), which becomes manifest as the *mahimā* or greatness of Indra The creative principle in the centre, viz. *madhya prāṇa* is called *indha* and the same is esoterically Indra (*sa yo'yam madhye prāṇaḥ esha evendraḥ tānesha prāṇān madhyata indriyenaindha yadaindha tasmādindha indho ha vai tam indra ityāchakshate paroksham*, Śatapatha VI 1. 1 2). Indra evolves for his abode a body by the clustering of all the Prāṇas (*atha yat prāṇā aśrayanta tasmādu prāṇāḥ śriyo' tha yat sarvasminn-aśrayanta tasmādu śarīram* Śatapatha VI 1. 1. 4)

The number of these Prāṇas is as variable as that of the Devas, for which the Brāhmanas supply elaborate details For example, giving details of Heptads, the Śatapatha says: 'the fire-altar consists of seven layers, (and there are) seven seasons, seven regions, seven worlds of the gods, seven stomas, seven prishtha (sāmans), seven metres, seven domestic animals, seven wild ones, seven vital airs in the head (*sapta śīrshan prāṇāḥ*), and whatever else there is of seven kinds, relating to deities and relating to the self—all that he thereby secures (*yat kiṁ cha sapta-vidham adhi devatam adhyātmaṁ tad enena sarvam āpnoti*, Śatapatha IX 5. 2. 8). This is also

the implication of the Rigvedic verse under discussion, viz to invoke all the Heptads or groups of seven which appear as integrated units in the process of creation at all levels. For example, undifferentiated Prāna existed as *Ekarshi*, but for the sake of creation it becomes *Saptarshi*, similarly Sūrya existed as a single horse but for the sake of movement converted himself into seven horses yoked to his chariot (*eko aśvo vahati...sapta vahanty-aśvāḥ*, I 164 2-3); the solar car originally, i e *ab intra*, having one wheel (*eka-chakra*, I 164. 2) comes to have seven *ab extra* (*sapta-chakra*, I 164 3). The obvious reference is to the solar rays which by virtue of the basic creative vibration become manifest as an octave of 'Sisters seven, Mothers, standing around the Babe' i e the Sun (*sapta svasāro abhi mātaraḥ śiśum*, IX. 86 36)

Then there is mention of the eight heroes coming from the upper part or northside. This too is a reference to the Prānas as being eight: 'He then takes (ghee) in sixteen ladlings: eight vital airs and eight limbs,—this (the symbolical) amount He takes it in the same spoon, for, indeed, the vital airs and the limbs are in the same body' (Śatapatha, IX. 2 2 6, Eggeling) The eight limbs include the head and the group of seven comprising four parts of the bust, two side extremeties and a root. These latter are the seven parts of the Suparna chiti, i. e the fire-altar built in the form of an eagle (*sapta-purusho hyayaṁ purusho yach chatvāra ātmā trayaḥ paksha-puchchhāni*, Śatapatha, VI 1 1 6). It would take long to explain the Suparna-chiti conception, but suffice it to say that the division of the body into seven parts is not so much an anatomical truth as hypothetical, in which the underlying Prānic disposition is envisaged primarily into two portions, viz the head as the symbol of Dyauh or the immortal essence or life sap called *Chiti-nidheya* Agni, and the trunk based on a central svastika referred to as *chatvāra ātmā*, the two lateral wings and a root (*puchchha*) at the point of which the body is supposed to be drawing its life-sap from its unmanifest source (*pratishthā*) The Fire in the portion of the trunk and side-limbs is called *Chityāgni*. The eight Prānas referred to in the Śatapatha IX 2 2 6 cited above, thus include the immortal and the mortal aspects of the bodily Fire, and seem to be covered by the Eight Heroes of the *mantra*

Similarly the numeral nine refers to the nine Prānas which like heroes assemble to form the troop of their Chief, Indra or the Madhya Prāna in each organism. According to the Śatapatha: there are nine regions, and Agni is the regions; nine vital airs and Agni is the vital airs (*nava diśo diśo' gnir nava prāṇāḥ prāṇā agniḥ*, VI. 3 1. 21). The regions or quarters provide the space for Indra to wax in his greatness, i e the centre to expand as the circumference They serve as the containers of Soma, Indra's favourite drink In fact the regions (*diśaḥ*) are all the intervening space between Dyāvā Pṛthivī, which serves as the receptacle of

Brahmanaspati Soma that filters through from the region of Parameshthī, the Universal, to that of Sūrya, the Individual manifestation, which latter has its Dyāvā-Pṛithivī or *Diśaḥ*. The four cardinal points (*prāchī, pratīchī, dakshiṇā, udīchī*; or in the words of the *mantra prāk, paśchāt, adhara, uttara*, X. 27. 15) with the four intermediate ones form a perfect *maṇḍala* or *vṛitta chakra* (circle or wheel), free from any cleft or fissure (*achchhidra pavitra*). It is permeated by the Three Fires which are being fed by the Rita or Soma from the higher or unmanifested region of Parameshthī. That is the grand ocean from the margins of which the Tortoise symbolising by its convex and concave shells the Dyāvā-Pṛithivi, drinks its potion of Soma (*dyāvā-pṛithivyo hi kūrmaḥ*, Śatapatha VII. 5. 1. 10). Besides the eight quarters, the ninth one is the centre or focus in which all the peripheral points are merged.

We may now understand the significance of the epithet *sthivimantah*, for the Nine Heroes are said to possess winnowing baskets or receptables for collecting *anna* or *soma* The quarters of space are graphically described as hollow baskets filled with grain or food (*anna*) for Agni which is the eater of food (*annāda*). Agni represents force or energy which continues its vibration in the cosmos perpetually because it is continually receiving its fuel or food in the form of Soma from a higher unmanifested source.

It is possible to understand the numerical figures of 7, 8, 9 and 10 with reference to the manifestation of Life (Agni Prajāpati or Indra) as an aggregate of *Manas, Prāṇa, Vāk*, i. e. Mind, Life and Matter Manas corresponds to Seven as the *Sapta hotṛi yajña* of Manu in which he offered the first oblation and first kindled the sacrificial fire (*yebhyo hotrām prathamām āyeje manuḥ samiddhāgnir manasā sapta-hotṛibhiḥ*, X 63 7, cf also Yajur., *yena yajñas tāyate saptahotā*, 34 4) The principle of Mind is the first factor to become effective in the process of manifestation.

The second principle is Prāṇa corresponding to Eight, as the immortal life-sap in the head (*chiti-nidheya agni*) together with the mortal life-sap residing in the lower body or the several limbs of Suparna as explained above.

The third factor in giving a concrete and visible form to each organism is constituted of the Gross Elements or Bhūtas which symbolise Soma, for the collection of which the nine regions (*nava diśaḥ*) or *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī* or the material body is invoked as a fit receptacle (*sthivi*).

The fourth stage is represented by the final form in which Mind, Life and Matter co-exist in a triunity which we call the living organism or the conscious body. Its significant name is Vaiśvānara (*sa esho' gnir vaiśvanaro yat purushaḥ*, Śatapatha, X. 6.1.11), so called "because it is the sphere of the three worlds (*viśva*)

and their three controlling principles the *naras* : Now that Vaiśvānara is all these worlds : this earth is the region and Agni is its ruler , the air is the region, and Vāyu is its ruler , the sky is its region, and Āditya is its ruler' (Śatapatha, IX. 3.1.13). The Vaiśvānara Purusha, the corporeal Person, comes into existence by the cosmic triads coalescing into a single entity which is singularly new and which we call Life. The Vaiśvānara is the same as Virāt, the mundane egg which Purusha enters and 'animates as its vital soul or divine principle' (Ṛig X. 90. 4, Griffith). The Virāj is intimately related with numeral 10, as it has ten constituents (Gopatha, V 15-20), and the metre of that name is formed of ten syllables. Virāj is equivalent to *Mahān* or *Mahimā* of the Purusha to be sacrificed and reborn

These ten elements are referred to in the next verse which mentions Kapila as their Chief shared in common by all and chosen to execute their final purpose (*daśānām ekam kapilam*, X. 27 16) Who is this Kapila, of the tawny or red colour, through whom the rest find their fulfilment ? He is undoubtedly the Sun, identified variously as Indra, Agni and Prāṇa He is the centre of the macrocosm and the microcosm, the universe and the individual organism, and his presence is the guarantee and signal for all the constituents of Virāj to start functioning According to the Gopatha, V 15-20, *Deva, Ritu, Diśā, Chhandas, Stoma, Prishtha, Hotraka* (=*Yajña*), *Loka, Indriya* and *Veda* (=*Rishi*) are the nine factors in the making of Virāj, the tenth being the *Devaganas*, the same as Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas and Aśvins, and identified as the Prāṇas, or the single deity called Prāna The tawny or red colour is the sign of *Rajas* or *Gati* (motion), or *Akshara*, or of that face which drinks Soma, for Soma is tawny (*somo vai babhruh*, Śatapatha, VII 2 4. 26 , *sa yat somarūpānam viśvarūpasya mukham āsa sa babhruka iva babhrur iva hi Somorājā* (Śatpatha, I 6 3 3). Verse 16 also refers to this Kapila as the Child of the mother whom she has reared in the interior of Waters (*garbham mātā sudhitam vakshanāsu bibharti*, X. 27 16). Agni is the Babe and the Waters are the ocean of Rita in Parameshthī, they are the Mother of Agni 'The mighty and expansive Waters, containing the universal germ, produced Agni. Thence sprang into being the one spirit of the Gods' (X 121. 7) This single moving *Asu* or Life spirit which was the source of birth of the Gods was Agni. The same is also called Sūrya as being concealed in the infinite ocean (of Rita) whence the Gods obtained it · When, O ye Gods, like Yatis, ye caused all existings things to grow, then you brought Sūrya forward who was lying hidden in the sea (*atrā samudra ā gūlhamā sūryam ajabhartana*, X 72. 7) Parameshthī is the symbol of universal Rita, the Mother of all creation (*mātā pitaram rita ā babhāja*, I. 164 8), sharing it with the seed-depositing Father, viz Svayambhū She is also called the *Yoni* or *Mahat Brahma* (*mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbham dadhāmy-*

aham, Gita, 14 3-4). The Waters symbolise the rarified formless matter in its subtle state distributed in equilibrium (*sāmya, prakriti*)

The next stanza acquaints us with three new symbols, viz. the fattened sheep, the dice thrown in sport, and the two bows in the celestial waters (X. 27. 17)

'The Heroes dressed with fire the fatted wether' (*pīvānam mesham apachanta vīrah*) Sūrya is mentioned in verse 1 as the Bull cooked by the Heroes, and he is also the fat Wether. Why is the sun called a *mesha* ? The sheep is *par excellence* the animal covered with a thick hairy coat of wool (*keśa*) The hair is the symbol of Uchchhishṭa, i. e a growth from a living organism which is thrown out and rejected by it but which once formed an integral part of it. This outgrowth is natural and a sign of health and not disease. The whole creation is thus looked upon as the *uchchhishta* or overflow of Brahman, and the creative aspect of Brahman or Prajāpati himself is named *Uchchhishta* A whole hymn of the Atharvaveda elaborates and exalts the *Uchchhishta* or Surplus Brahma doctrine (*uchchhishtāj jajñire sarve, Atharva*, XI. 7. 23)

Uchchhishṭa is also referred to as *tyakta* (*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ*, Yajur, 40 1), and the whole universe (*idam sarvam*) is looked upon as the *tyakta* portion of the Creator. When Brahman becomes active far creation, its energising is a rhythmic pulsation and this vibration depends upon the food or fuel that is taken and assimilated. That food is called *Brahmaudana* Agni, Sūrya, Indra all are conceived to subsit on the intake of *odana* or food, which is called Soma, and then only their vibrating movement (*brimhaṇa*) becomes possible and continues All energy lives on its fuel, is the immutable law of physical manifestation. The second complementary rule is that wherever food is eaten and transformed into energy, a portion is rejected as its ash called *tyakta*, and also *pravargya* *Brahmaudana* and *Pravargya* are the ascending and descending parts of the same revolving wheel Prāṇa or Life is bound to take food and throw out refuse.

The *Mesha* is the best symbol of a creature producing *pravargya* in the form of *keśa* or *loma* Hair, nails, faecal matter are all examples of matter expelled by a living organism. One who grows *keśa* preeminently is called *Keśī* or *Keśava* Agni in all its three forms of Agni on earth, Vāyu in the air and Sūrya in heaven, is *Keśī*. Each one of them is *Keśī*, and hence the Rigveda refers to three *Keśins* (*trayaḥ keśina ritututhā vichakshate* I 164 44) In fact the five gross elements of matter are the *keśa* or *pravargya* of the Creator whence he is called *Keśī*, the archetypal Yati of long loose hair, and in Purānic terminology *Dhūrjaṭi* or *Vyomakeśa* (whose locks are the sky, which is the symbol of the Five Bhūtas) In one Rigvedic

passage there is a reference to the Five Keśins which include Earth (identified with Agni), Water (*Visham*), Fire (*Jyoti*), Air (filling the *Rodasī* or the region of Rudra who is the father of the Maruts), and Sky (*viśvam svaḥ*, X 136 1)—the Five Material Elements essential for corporeal and formal manifestation and therefore the embodiments of Uchchhishta or Pravargya *par excellence*. The fat sheep with its thick coat of wool is thus a *keśī*, and identical with Sūrya whose rays are his long hair overspreading all space (*sūryasya tapato lokān agneḥ somasya chāpyuta, aṁśavo ye prakāśante mama te keśa-samjñitāḥ* Sāntiparvan, 328. 43)

Why is the wether said to be fat (*pīvānam meshaṁ* X 27 17)? It is because fat or *medas* is the form of *medha* (*medo vai medhaḥ*, Śatapatha, III 8 4 6) There could be no creation without the oblation of Sūrya which typifies the cosmic Aśvamedha Fat is the same as *Ghrita*, which is the visible form of Agni (*āgneyaṁ ghritam*, Śatapatha, VIII 4 1 41, *etad vai pratyakshād yajña rūpam yad ghritam*, Śatapatha, XII 8 2 15) The reason is obvious, since fire flares up by pouring butter and is put out by water The heat and light emitted by the Sun and distributed in space through its thousand-fold rays symbolise *Ghrita*, the rain which moistens the earth (*ghritena prithivī vyudyate*, I. 164 47), or fat (*meda, vapā*) which shrouds all space

The reference to the throwing of dice by way of sport and gaming (*nyuptā akshā anu dīva āsan*, X. 27 17) points to the creation of stars upon stars in untold multitudes as the divine pastime, as suggested by Ludwig also Elsewhere the constellations are compared to golden birds wearing the robes of oceanic waters of Rita and spreading their wings to fly in the yonder space (*harayaḥ suparṇā apo vasānā divam utpatanti*, I 164 47) The dice were usually made of gold (*Vedic Index*, I 2) as used in the game in the beginning of the Agnyādheya ceremony The stars are like shining globules of matter in the cosmic fire ritual.

The two mighty bows inside waters, deposited to cleans and purify (*dvā dhanum brihatīm apsvantaḥ*, X. 27 17) refer to the basal dichotomy functioning in creation which first makes its appearance in Āpah or Parameshthī. These are named the Bhṛigus and the Aṅgirases (*sarvam āpomayam bhūtam sarvaṁ bhṛigvangiromayam*, Gopatha, I 1 29). One of them is *nīla* and the other *lohita* which belongs to Rudra and which Indra requires to smite Vṛitra (*sa dhanur ādatta tadevendra-dhanuh, nīlamasyodaraṁ lohitam prishtham*, Atharva, XV 1 6-7, *vārtraghnaṁ vai dhanuḥ*, Śatapatha, V 3 5. 27) They are also typified as hot and cold (*ghramsa* and *hima*, Atharva, XII 1 48) The basic duality of the two bows may be further considered with reference to the Universal (*Parameshthi*) and Individual (*Dyavā-Prithivī*) manifestations. The pillar (*Skambha*) which upholds the manifest worlds

is the rod of the bow extending from the earth to the sky, i e. which permeates the Dyāvā-Pṛithivī Mandala as its support or diameter (*vishkambha*). The other Pillar extends to the region of Parameshthī and Svayambhū as the support and source of the unmanifest creation. The bow is intended to shoot arrows and thereby regulate and control everything within its range The first bow belongs to the One Rudra (*eka eva rudro na dvitīyāya tasthe, Taittirīya Samhitā,* I 8 6, 1) who keeps his weapon unseen on the highest Tree (*parame vrikshe āyudham nidhāya, Yajur,* XVI 51) which is the same as Parameshthī The second bow belongs to Rudra differentiated as the Many (*asamkhyātā sahasrām ye rudrā adhi bhūmyām, Yajur,* XVI. 54), and is called Pināka which he wields with his hands (*pinākam bibhrad āgahi Yajur,* XVI. 51) According to Pt Madhusudan Ojha the pivot of the manifest world extending from the earth to the sky is called *Vāni* in the Rigveda (I. 85. 10, IV 24 9, IX 97, 8) and also *Opaśa* (I 173. 6) which is identified with *yajña* (*yajña indram avardhayad yad bhūmim vyavartayat, chakrāṇa opaśam divi,* RV. VIII 14. 5, *Devatānivit,* pp 11-12)

Continuing about the Heroes, verse 18 says, 'Crying aloud they ran in all directions. One half of them will cook, and not the other' (X 27. 18). The region of Dyāvā-Pṛithivī, the manifest world of Rudra is called *Rodasī* (II. 12 1-2), that of Parameshthī, the Formless Universal, *Krandasī*, and that of Svayambhū, the Unmanifest One, *Samyatī* (II. 12. 8) In *Rodasī* sound (*Vāk*) and motion are regulated as in the *Yajña*, in *Krandasī* sound is an uproar and motion is in a riotous condition, whereas in *Samyatī* as the name shows both are restrained, that is Vāk is silence and motion is withdrawn in a condition of rest (*sthiti*) In the present verse the condition in *Krandasī* or Parameshthī is described, where Vāk is loud crying (*krośana*) and motion is haphazard and conflicting (*vishvañchah*, cf *vishūchī dik* as opposed to *sadhrīchī*, I 164. 31).

The cooking by one half (*pachāti nemah,* X. 27 18) refers to the activity of the Angirases who are the sons of Agni (*te angirasah sūnavas-te agneh pari-jajñire,* X 62. 5). 'Cooking' refers to the creative activity which is advanced in its course by the power of Agni. The other half which remains inactive or passive in creativity are the Bhrigus who typify the principle of Soma. It has been mentioned above that both the Bhṛigus and the Angirases, viz. Soma and Agni, co exist in Parameshthī or the Universal

Savitā, the Impeller of the Gods (*devānām prasavitā*), incarnating as Sūrya in the manifest worlds, declares to us that Agni will perform the creative function, but he will use Soma as his food, in both liquid form as *ghī* (*sarpir-anna*) and in solid form as fuel (*dru-anna*) Butter and wood are the symbols of the boneless and the

bony respectively (I 164 4), pointing to the dual entity in creation, viz the Devas and the Bhūtas, or Energy and Matter Agni has the intrinsic power to operate with both of them and thereby 'cook' or create manifest forms

The troop advancing from a distance (*grāmam vahamānam ārād*, X, 27. 19) refers to the host of Gods who take their abode in the body of the Purusha, as explained in the Aitareya Up I, 2. 4. The Tāndya Br explicitly calls Purusha to be a *deva-grāma* (*naro vai devānām grāmaḥ*, Tāndya Br. VI, 9 2)

The Gods display their moving activity by their own intrinsic power (*svadhā*) and not by material means (*achakrā*) The revolving wheel of Time controls the movement and life-duration of mortal men, and not of the immortal Gods But Indra, although immortal and aeviternal, nevertheless incarnates in the life-cycles of men (*sishakty-aryaḥ pra yugā janānām*, X, 27. 19), and destroying and disintegrating the fossilised ones creates new life ever and ever again (*navīyān*, cf. *navo navo bhavati jāyamānaḥ*, X, 85. 19) The word *śiśnā*, derived by Sāyana from the root *śnath*, to kill or injure, refers to malignant beings or bodies that thwart the free flow of the life-sap. It is ordained by Indra that such decrept, rigid and decaying lesions should be replaced by fresh revivified manifestations of the life-principle

'There my two Bulls are harnessed : drive them not far , here let them often linger' (X, 27 20). The two Bulls yoked to the car of the body are *Manas* and *Prāna* which provide driving power to the physical organism symbolised as Vāk or the Pañch-Bhūtas In the Rigveda itself Indra and Agni are frequently mentioned as Steers (*vrisho'gnih*, III, 27. 14, *sa esha ādityaḥ saptaraśmir vrishabhastuvishmān*, II, 12. 12 , *vrishabhaḥ*, I, 9 4 etc) We may also identify them as Prāṇa and Apāna, or Agni and Soma, which energise and vitalise the body. Although they are yoked to the car of Indra like his two steeds, they also owe allegiance to Pramara, which as Griffith takes, stands for the Destroyer or Death. Āditya, the eighth son of Aditi, is nursed by her to undergo both life (*prajā = prajanana*) and death *mritya*, X, 72 9). Similar is the destiny of the mortal body in which the Devas symbolise life (*āyu*) and the Bhūtas invite death.

'The object of life is fulfilled by the waters (*āpaśchidasya vinaśanty artham*, X, 27. 20), where Waters stand for *Prāna* (vitality, *āpo vai prānāḥ*, Śatapatha, III, 8 2 4) and *Amrita*, i e Āyu (immortality and longevity, *amritā hyāpaḥ*, Śatapatha, III, 9 4 16) The waters or secretions circulate within the body, but they are purified by the Sun above us (*sūraścha marka upari babhūvān*, X, 27. 20) The Sun as the source of the cosmic Prāṇa is the most potent cleanser and impeller of body, vital airs and mind.

Verse 21 draws attention to the immortal glory of the Universal lest we be dazed by the powers of the mortal body: 'This is the thunderbolt which often whirleth down "from the misty lofty realm of Sūrya Beyond this realm there is another glory. so through old age they pass and feel no sorrow' (X. 27. 21, Griffith). The thunderbolt (*vajra*) of Indra is Time, *Saṁvatsara* (*saṁvatsaro hi vajraḥ*, Śatapatha III 4 4. 15) which is hitting all created objects and reducing them to dust The weapon of Time smites without mercy and even the toughest stone becomes pulverised by its impact This wheel turns in many ways (*purudhā vivṛittaḥ*), e g as *ahorātra*, *māsa*, *ayana*, *saṁvatsara*, *yuga*, *kalpa*, etc disintegrating the young and the old, the mortal men and even the immortal gods (*esha vai mṛityur yat saṁvatsaraḥ*, *esha hi martyānām ahorātrābhyām āyuḥ kshiṇoty atha mriyate*, Śatpatha X 4 3 1. The year, doubtless, is the same as Death, for he (Time, Prajāpatī) it is who, by means of day and night, destroys the life of mortal beings, and then they die : Therefore the Year is the same as Death') All that which is below the Sun, i. e within the range of Dyāvā-Pṛithivī or Rodasī, is in the grip of Death (*yat kim chārvāchīnam ādityāt sarvam tan-mṛityunāptam*, Śatapatha, X 5 1. 4) Indra's bolt strikes or is effective in those expansive (*bṛihatḥ*) worlds created by the Pravargya of Sūrya (*sūryasya purīshāt*, X 27. 20) On the other side of Sūrya, viz in the Universal (*Parameshṭhī*) is a different kind of glory (*anyat śravaḥ*), viz immortal bliss unaffected by Time, a state of deliverance reached by the pious after the expiry of old age.

Verse 22 acquaints us with one of the most significant and obscure symbolism of the hymn : Bound fast to every tree the cow is lowing, and thence the man-consuming birds are flying' (X. 27. 22) Sāyana takes the tree as bow, cow as bow string and man-consuming birds as deadly arrows, but this is hardly relevant. The Tree stands for the World Tree, Aśvattha or Vanaspati of a thousand braches explained above under verse 14. The Universal (*Parameshṭhī*) is the Forest (*Vanam*) comprising millions of universes as so many Trees (*Vṛiksha*). There is one Cow or Infinite Nature in the Universal, called by various names as Aditi, Viśvarūpā, Kāmadughā, Kevalī, Viśvadhāyas, Virāj As Aditi she is the Mother of Gods, and naturally remembered as the Great Mother (*Mahī Mātā*, VIII 25. 3 , V. 47 1) ; she is perfect, irresistible, unrivalled, celestial, deathless and meet for worship Creation is the conversion of water into milk, and cow is *par excellence* the animal giving milk as a result of calving, and therefore she is taken as the symbol of motherhood. She is Aditi (VIII. 101. 15), the symbol of immortality, as opposed to Diti, the mother of Daityas or Asuras (V. 62 8, *aditiṁ ditim cha*).

Water has no butter, but milk is permeated by tiny globules of butter, which is a form of Agni, since *ghī* kindles the fire and water puts it out (*etad vā*

agneḥ priyam dhāma yad ghritam, Taittirīya Br. I. 1. 9 6, also *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* XI. 1. 7. 1, also *Yajur* IV. 17, 'This butter is thy body, O shining Agni'). Agni as Prajāpati is the germ of creation and *ghrita* is conceived of as the seed (*reto vā ājyam*, Śatapatha I 9. 2 7) Every particle of formal manifestation is marked by creativity and this is declared as the Sarvahuta Yajña of Prajāpati (in which he offered his whole self as oblation) accompanied by a spraying shower of *ājya* (*tasmād yajñāt sarvahutaḥ saṁbhritam prishad ājyam*, X 90. 8)

The symbolism of Agni, Ghṛita and Payas (milk) are inter-related and the cow is its best example *Purusha, Aśva* and *Gau* are three essential factors in manifestation, represented ritually by the three yajñas called Purushamedha, Aśvamedha and Gomedha. *Purusha* stands for *Manas, Aśva* for *Prāna* and *Gau* for *Bhūta*. Life or conscious organism is the result of the three rolled into one, but retaining their separate entities A portion of the Universal Mind, Life and Matter is utilised in each individual manifestation Prajāpati, the Creator, suffers dismemberment of his own person in the form of these three animals who are spoken of as victims of sacrifice, *Purusha* also being a *paśu* (*abadhnan purusham paśum*, X. 90. 15). Mind or consciousness is a unity, but so dismembered as to be distributed in each limb and cell of the body Similarly there is one Aśva, symbolising the vital energy of an organism, but this divine Horse (*devajāta sapti*, I 162. 1; *devabandhu vājī*, I. 162. 18) suffers parcelling out of its limbs to provide *prānic* energy to each centre in the body, its thirty-four ribs being cut by the hatchet, as it were, for the thirty three Devas in the body and for the Unmanifest Prajāpati as the thirty-fourth (I. 161. 10) Similarly the cow is called *Vasu-patnī*, the protecting mother of the Eight Vasus (I 164. 27), the latter symbolising the eight factors essential for formal manifestation, viz *Manas, Prāṇa-Apāna* and *Vāk* or the *Pañcha-Bhūtas*. This is the milk of the cow with which all are supported

Such a Cow is tied to the Cosmic tree in Parameshthī or the Universal as the Great Mother Aditi, and there is in each tree or individual manifestation her daughter, who virtually incarnates her Mother.

What is meant by the lowing of the Cow? The word *mīmayat* (X 27. 22) comes from the root *mā*, 'to sound or bleat', and 'to measure'. The bellowing sound of the cow determines the measure of her movement or extension of influence. The distance travelled by the Cow is specified as three leagues, one *yojana* for each step, and thus in three steps her omniform is revealed to the Calf who walks with her (*amīmed vatso anu-gām apaśyad viśvarūpyaṁ trishu yojaneshu*, I. 164 9). The Calf is the Sun who as Vishṇu measures the three worlds by his three strides, the three

worlds standing for the basic triad of creation. The lowing of the Cow is the sound uttered by her, and sound (*śabda*) is co-extensive with *ākāśa* or *vyoman*. So the Cow is spoken of as *Vāk*, which symbolises all the Five Elements of Matter, *ākāśa* being one of them, the most subtle and first of all. *Vāk* or Matter is as extensive as manifest Brahman in the differentiated states of the created worlds (*yāvad brahma vishṭhitaṁ tāvatī vāk*, RV X. 114. 8)

The Cow in each individual centre begins its lowing or measuring out and instantly life starts to pulsate. Eeach organism is also like a Tree. The Three Birds seated on each Tree are Gāyatrī, Trishtup and Jagatī, the three metres of the life-chant or rhythm, which begin their flight as soon as they listen to the lowing of the Cow The flight of the Three Birds (*Tri Suparna*) is for the purpose of bringing the heavenly Soma to the level of the earth The Tri-Suparna legend is found in the Aitareya Brāhmana (III 25-28), where Jagatī and Trishtup failing in their mission to transport Soma from heaven, entrust the task to Gāyatrī which as the basic type of all metres succeeds in snatching the immortal Soma (*gāyatrī vāva sarvāni chhandāṁsi*, *Tāndya Br* VIII 4 1, *tritīyasyām ito divi soma āsit, taṁ gāyatry-āharat*, *Taittirīya Br* I 1. 3 10) The man consuming bird is *Śyena* (*pūrush-ādaḥ vayah*, Eagle, which is identified with the Gāyatrī (*yad gāyatrī śyeno bhūtva divaḥ somam āharat tena sā śyenaḥ*, *Śatapatha*, III 4 1 12) *Gāyatrī* succeeds because she as the chant of the earth is able to provide a fixed positive point to the opposite point in heaven, which means that Gāyatrī starts an irresitible oscillating movement. Gāyatrī, Pṛithivī, Agni and Vasu are all aspects of the same principle In fact it is Agni or the life principle on earth which stands in need of heavenly Soma to revitalise itself. Without the Universal or the Collective, the Individual or the Particular would soon lose its vibrating force. Hence it is indispensable that the Soma from above should continue to enkindle the Fire on earth or the material plane.

Soma is *Śyena*, and Agni also is *Śyena*, the former is *Śyena* because having come from heaven it conceals itself in this earth, and the latter (Agni) is Śyena because Soma assumes the form of Agni in its descent on earth (*śyeno' si gāyatra-chchhandasā anu tvārabhe svasti sampārayeti sa yadāha śyeno'sīti somaṁ vā etadāha; esha ha vā agnir-bhūtvā'smin loke saṁśyāyati, tad yat saṁśyāyati tasmāch-chhyenas tach-chhyenasya śyenatvam*, Gopath, I, 5 12) So under each Life-tree is a Cow, and hearing the sound of that Cow the Birds perched on that Tree go into action. This describes the manifestation of life on the material plane and its being sustained by the cosmic life-force that is universal. Both the Universal and the Individual exercise a pull on each other and the former lays down the law for the latter which cannot be bypassed or thwarted. This is expressed as the principle of

'Fright' governing the whole world (*athedaṁ viśvam bhuvanaṁ bhayāte,* X, 27 22). The ordinances of an *Antaryāmī* controller rule over all and their supreme authority cannot be challenged in time or place (cf. *bhayād asyāgnis-tapati bhayāt tapati sūryaḥ, Katha Up* 6. 3). The Immortal is the region of *abhaya* which is called Aja or Avyaya, the mortal Bhūtas or the material plane of existence is the sphere of fear. But the restraint imposed by the moral and physical laws of the Creator should not enervate any one. We ought rather to perfect ourselves both in *jñāna* and *karma* and accordingly plan our lives. *Karma* is referred to as the carrying out of the three pressings of the Soma sacrifice for Indra (*indrāya sunvad*) and *Jñāna* as learning the Law from the Rishi, i e. the Svayambhū (*rishaye cha śikshat,* X, 27 22).

In verse 23 there is mention of three Fires and two Somas, and to the existence of the primeval ordinances in the God's mansion from where their separation in formal manifestation has taken place (X, 27. 23). The first-created ones (*prathamā*) stand for the basic laws of creation (*tāni dharmāṇi prathamāny-āsan,* X, 90. 16) The mansion of Gods (*devānām māne*) refers to the region of Parameshthī where originally *yajña* existed, and the Devas existed incipient in the *yajña* From the *ab intra yajña* of Parameshthī, the *ab extra yajña* of Sūrya was created It means to say that the undifferentiated Dharmas in the Universal were given their separate entity in Dvāvā-Pṛithivī or the Individual manifestation This process is referred to as *krintatra,* i. e cutting and separating or creating of diverse forms through the agency of Tvashṭā (cf *tvastā rūpāṇi pimsatu,* X, 184. 1).

The very explicit reference the Three Fires and the Two Somas is significant (X, 27 23), The three Agnis are well-known in the ritual as Gārhapatya, Dakshiṇāgni, and Ahavanīya. Agni, Vāyu, Āditya are also forms of one and the same Fire (*etad bhūteshu lokeshu agnibhūtaṁ sthitaṁ tridhā, rishayo gīrbhir archanti vyañjitaṁ nāmabhis tribhih, Brihaddevatā,* I, 64) In explaining verse 8 above, we have mentioned the five stages or modalities of manifestation, viz 1 Svayambhū, 2 Parameshthī, 3 Sūrya, 4 Chandra, and 5 Pṛithivī. These states or degrees of manifestation have reference to the Universal and the Individual, and the above five consist of three Fires and two Somas as follows :

1. Svayambhū (Agni)	Universal	The Unmanifested	Avyakta	Brahmāgni
2. Parameshthī (Soma)	,,	Formless Manifestation	Mahat	Dik-Soma

Prajāpati in his creation? The answer is 'Prāṇa', 'He became the Breath (vital air), for Breath is everything here' (*sa prāno' bhavat prāno vā idaṁ sarvam*, Śatāpatha XI 1 6 17). The wind is the symbol of Prāna; whatsoever is endowed with breath is therefore Prajāpati.

Prāna, or Breath, or Life in corporeal manifestation is therefore the most important, most vital and most mysterious possession with us all. This is the burden of the final stanza of this enigmatical hymn. Why Rishi Vasukra enters into a series of riddles is to explain the mystery of Life both in its manifest and unmanifest forms and both on the plane of the individual and the universal He therefore sums up his theme · 'This is thy Life . do thou mark and know it' (*sā te jīvātur uta tasya viddhi*, X. 27 24) Life is like a sacrificial session or a battlefield : let us not hide or keep ourselves obscure (*mā smaitādṛig apa gūhah*) and adopt a retreating attitude If we look at the Sun we find that he manifests with his light the immortal heaven (*svaḥ*), and with the heat of the same rays absorbs the moisture from the earth and makes it invisible (*gūhate busam*).

'His foot is never free from robes that veil it' (*sa pādurasya nirṇijo na muchyate*, X 27 24). What is the robe and what is the foot ? The *yajña* is the robe or cloth woven of seven Threads (*sapta-tantu*), triply twisted (*trivrit*, i e a coalescence of *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *sushupti*), and consisting of five modalities (*pañcha yāmam*, viz. Svayambhū Parameshthī, etc , X 124 1). Prāṇa-Agni (Life or Consciousness) is the Deity of this *yajña* The cloth is described as *sapta-tantu* because it is woven by the warp and woof of Mind, Life and the Five Elements of Gross Matter, called *Manas*, *Prāna*, *Vāk* The Self is defined as constituted of these three (*etanmayo vā ayam ātmā vāṅmayo manomayah prānamayaḥ*, Śatapatha XIV, 4 3.10). *Yajña* makes Indra grow strong (*yajña indram avardhayad*, VIII 14 5) Indra is Sūrya, and the latter is the most notable example of cosmic *yajña*, absorbing universally Soma from the earth below and from the unmanifest source above

The cloth is said to be woven by the Mothers for their son (*vastrā putrāya mātāro vayanti*, V 47. 6) The Great Mother (*Mahī Mātā*) is originally one as Virāj but for the sake of creation she becomes the Sisters Seven, the Mothers standing around the Babe, the noble Infant (*sapta svasāro abhi mātaraḥ śiśum navam jajñānaṁ jenyam vipaśchitam* (IX. 86 36) The Babe or Son is Sūrya. For him the Mothers prepare the robe by which Sūrya is called Vivasvān, the robed one Seven Sisters (I 164 3) are essential to produce Seven Sons of different categories, viz. *Manas*, *Prāṇa* and the *Pañcha Bhūtas*.

The foot veiled by the cloth refers to Pṛithivī, which is said to be produced from the feet of Purusha (*padbhyām bhūmiḥ*, X. 90. 10). The *Yajña* of Sūrya

extends from heaven to earth comprehending the *mandala* of each *Dyāvā Prithivī*. Material earth is an inalienable part of immortal heaven, and no *yajña* is complete unless it descends to the level of earthly manifestation or realised on the physical plane However well conceived may be the aastract thoughts they do not yield fruit unless they are made concrete through action *Yajña* plans to invoke the Deva in the Bhūta.

HYMN X 28

The next hymn X. 28. 1-12 is also by Vasukra continuing the style of the riddles The first verse is spoken by the wife of Vasukra who addresses Indra as her father-in-law. Vasukra typifies Agni, the deity of the Vasus, and the energy of Agni on earth, viz Vasu-patnī, looks to the Sun in heaven as her fountain-source and invokes him to come to the *yajña* where all other deities are present Indra is the *Madhya Prāna* (Śatapatha VI. 1. 1. 2, *sa yòyam madhye prāṇaḥ esha evendraḥ*), and without him the senses (*indriyāni*) would not be able to function The food and the Soma are primarily intended to give strength to Indra or *Madhya Prāṇa*

In verse 2, Indra is referred to as a loud bellowing Bull (cf *tridhā baddho vrishabho roravīti maho devo martyān āviveśa*, IV 58 3). Sūrya is no doubt the Great Sprinkler (*vrisha* or *ukshā*) who fecundates both sky and earth with his rays. Verse 3 refers to 'the cooking of the Bull', a motif already mentioned and explained in X. 27. 2.

Stanza 4 refers to the rivers sending their swelling waters backward. The rivers are the senses which usually are drawn towards the objects of their desire. When they are controlled by the Mind which is symbolised by Indra (*yo jāta eva prathamo manasvān*, II. 12 1), the senses become introvert.

'The fox steals up to the approaching lion' (*lopāśaḥ simham pratyañchamatsāḥ*, X 28 4) The fox typifies the Prānic energy in the individual organism, and the lion as the uncontrolled lord of the forest is the symol of unharnessed cosmic energy

'The jackal drives the wild-boar from the brushwood' (*kroshtā varāham niratakta kakshāt*, X 28 4) The jackal is the model of a lean affrighted creature, i. e. Bhūtas or corporeal modality, and the wild-boar (*varāha*) of a fat-dripping powerful and aggressive animal symbolising Sūrya. Fat (*ghritā*) is but the visible form of Agni (*āgneyo vai ghritam*, Śatapatha VII. 4. 1. 41 ; *etad vā agneḥ priyam dhām yad ghritam*, Taittirīya Br. I. 1 9 6). *Ghrita* is the essential element in milk, and the Sun scattering heat and light through his rays is mentioned as

moistening the earth with butter (*ghritena prithivī vyudyate*, I. 164. 47). The Sun is the great Herdsman (*gopā*) who has a multitude of cows rich in milk and butter, i e. Agni.

Indra declares, 'My Sire begot me with no foe to match me' (*aśatrum hi mā janitā jajāna*, X. 28 6) This idea is repeated in the Rigveda several times (I. 32. 4 , I. 102 8 , X. 54. 2 , also Śatapatha XI 1 6. 17).

The symbolism of verse 8 is rather obscure. 'The Deities approached, they carried axes; splitting the wood they came with their attendants They laid good timber in the fire-receivers, and burnt the grass where they found it growing' X. 28. 8, Griffith). Here we have the familiar imagery of the Forest and the Tree Parameshthī (the Universal) is the Forest, it is an assemblage of numberless trees and is overgrown all over with dense undergrowth (*kripīta*). The Devas are the troops of Indra and make themselves effective by using the same weapon as belongs to Indra, viz the thunderbolt (*vajra*) of which the synomym *paraśu* has been used here (*vajro vai paraśuh*, Śatapatha III 6 10) The Gods began to fell the timber of the Forest to fashion individual universes symbolised as the Trees In each case the splitting or shearing was done by *Vajra*, which is Agni or the principle of expansion and contraction, which means cosmic pulsation. Agni does its work through *Samvatsara* or the cyclic wheel of Time revolving through ages and given material form to create objects Sūrya is the archetype of the work of the Devas, viz a model of *yajña*, which forms ths navel or centre of each universe (*ayam yajño bhuvanasya nābhih*, I 164 35). Good fuel (*sudrva*) stands for the material cause of the worlds, which become manifest in physical creation. A portion of the primordial matter is utilised in forming each universe, which takes shape by the massing of matter in space Each fire-stick is but a symbol of Agni, i e. energy transformed into matter *Vakshanā* as fire-receiver signifies an *ukhā*, i e a unit of Dyavā-Pṛithivī (*ime vai lokā ukhā*, Śatapatha VI 5 2. 17) For storage of Soma the symbol is a *drona-kalaśa*, and for collecting Agni an *ukhā*.

Kripīta (X 28 8) stands for brushwood or underwood. As in a Forest, besides big and small trees there is also dense undergrowth; similarly in the most gigantic process of creation where stars, constellations, galaxies, spiral nebulae, etc. are coming into existence by the tectonic forces of Infinite Nature, numberless meteors and loose masses of matter fly into space as brushwood which burn for a time and then fuse (*yatrā kripītam anu tad dahanti*, X 28 8).

Verse 9 continues in the true strain of a riddle, such as we sometimes find in medival Nirguna literature: 'The hare hath swallowed up the opposing razor:

I sundered with a clod the distant mountain The great will I make subject to the little : the calf shall wax in strength and eat the bullock' (X. 28. 9).

The hare (*śaśa*) is the symbol of Mind. The Moon is called *śaśāṅka* and she was produced from the mind of the Purusha (*chandramā manaso jātaḥ*, X. 90 13). The razor made of iron symbolises the material world with all its pain and misery, which the mind has to experience in life

The clod (*loga*) is a symbol of the visible or manifest creation, the earthly existence, and the mountain which has to be pierced is the unmanifest or subtle (*avyakta, guhā, adri, sānu*). The Fire was first lit on the top of the hill, meaning the immortal heaven, and from there brought to the earth through *yajña*

The great becomes subject to the little (*bṛihantam chid rihate randhayāni*, X. 28. 9), this clearly points to the correspondence and interrelation between the macrocosm and microcosm, between the universal and individual, between *pinda* and *brahmānda*, between Parameshthī and Sūrya, and between *Rita* and *Aham*.

'The calf shall grow in strength and eat the bullock' The calf represents young life and the bullock the life principle existing in eternity. The former depends on the latter, The Individual is conceived of as the Food and the universal as the Food-eater (*anna, annāda*) The latter attribute contributes to his immortality. As it is said · 'I am the first-born of the world-order, earlier than the Gods, in the navel of immortality Who has caused me to be born, he indeed protects me I, who am food, eat the eater of food I have overcome the whole world' (*Taittirīya Up* 3 10 6, *ahamasmi prathamajā ritasya pūrvam devebhyo' mritasya nāma yo mā dadāti sa ideva māvat aham annam annamadantam admi*, also in a chant of the Sāmaveda). The mighty forces of Nature can efface the Individual 'I' any time, he is but a tiny speck of life. Time is eating or wearing him away, but he is also eating his 'eater' and absorbing a portion of immortality This is his right to live in the face of all challenges, and he may truthfully feel · *aham viśvam bhuvanam abhayabhuvāma*. Everything goes on well so long as the individual Prāna (*vatsa*) can partake of the mighty Bull Indra (*vrishabha*) or the Sun, the source of life and consciousness.

'There hath the strong-winged eagle (*suparna*) left his talon' (*nakham āsishāya*, X, 28 10). Here is a reference to the bringing of heavenly Soma to the earth by Gāyatrī assuming the form of a Suparṇa Gāyatrī is the symbol of individual Prāṇa which has taken corporeal manifestation in the material body (i e. in *Vāk* or the *Pañcha-Bhūtas*). Earthly life is a Bird flapping its two wings, viz. *Prāṇa-Apāna*. The Bird fulfils the purpose of its own existence by bringing a share of

the cosmic or celestial life in the mortal body,—this is the transferring of the Soma-jar from heaven to earth by the Suparṇa of the legend The Suparṇa in its earthly session seems to belong to the earth and shares all its features and limitations, but it is a heavenly bird which left behind a talon or foot-mark in that immortal world of the gods. Its earthly session is the period and condition of its being snared. Like the eagle it dashes back to its original home, as a lion leaves his trap.

'Even the wild steer in his thirst is captured and a leathern strap holds his foot entangled' (*niruddhaś-chin-mahishas tarshyāvān*, X 28 10). The wild buffalo (*mahisha*) is the symbol of Parameshthī as the Bull is that of the Sun. It is also called *Gaura*, and the *Vāk* of Parameshṭhī is *Gaurī*. The wild bison is an animal roaming free in the forest that is the Universal. When the same is obliged to incarnate in the Individual centre it feels thirsty for the waters of Parameshthī that are known as *Rita* or *Soma* The leathern strap (*godhā*) is the principle of *charma* or *kritti* that serves as the finite envelope of the cosmic or infinite Life principle in the finite Each created organism has to put on the finitising coat This doctrine was known as Āvarana-vāda (cf *kim āvarīvaḥ*, X. 129. 1), and is implied in the term *charma* or *śarma*. What is *charma* amongst men is cryptically called *śarma* amongst gods (*charma vā etat krishṇasya mṛigasya tan mānusham śarma devatrā, Śatapatha* III 2 1 8) That which envelopes as *charma* serves as the protective sheath (*śarma*) of the object encased. *Godhā* or leathern strap is the symbol of *charma* or entangling sheath *Ayatha* (foot) is the symbol of earth (*padbhyām bhūmih*, X 90 14), i e the corporeal or material existence Those who fatten their flesh by trading on Brahma-knowledge are fastened by the snares of mortality and death (*tebhyo . ye brahmanah pratipīyanty annaiḥ*, X. 28 11).

'Those who devour the Bulls set free to wander, themselves destroy the vigour of their bodies' (*sima ukshno' vasrishtān adanti*, X. 28 11) Who and how many are the Bulls referred to here ? The Bulls are five and they are the five *Pindas*, viz. Svayambhū, Parameshthī, Sūrya, Chandra, Pṛithivī, i.e the five states of universal and individual manifestation : 'May those five Bulls which stand on high full in the midst of mighty heaven, having together swiftly borne my praises to the Gods, return' (*amī ye pañchokshno madhye tasthur maho divah, devatrā nu pravāchyam sadhrīchīnā ni vāvrituḥ*, I 105 10) These are the five *yajñatmās* or *adhidevatās* of Prajāpati (*tā vā etāḥ pañcha prajāpater-adhidevatāh*, Śatapatha XI 1 6 14). These five states being in the unmanifest and manifest as well as in the subtle and gross forms as explained before, stand integrated to one another. Eacho ne of them is destined to remain free. Freedom is immortality, the characteristic feature of a god's life, whereas

bondage or forced restraint is death. *Sarīra, Manas, Buddhi, Mahat, Avyakta,* all these five constituents of individuality must be allowed free functioning otherwise growth of personality is handicapped

'Those who exerted with their bodies in these chants to Soma, they were made peaceful by the holy rites' (X. 28 12) *Śamī* is taken by Sāyaṇa as equal to rites of Soma (*soma-yāga-karma*), the Brāhmanas take it as the pacifier of Agni (*prajāpatiḥ tam (agnim) śamyāśamayat tach-chhamyai śamīvam, Taittirīya Br* I. 1 3. 11; cf also *Satapatha* IX. 2. 3. 37) *Śamī* then was the symbol of Soma, and *Aśvattha* that of Agni (*agnir devebhyo nilāyata, aśvo rūpaṁ kritva so' śvatthe saṁvatsaram atishthat , tad aśvatthasyāśvatthatvam,* Taittirīya Br I. 1. 3 9) The symbolism of the *Śamī* with an *Aśvattha* growing in her womb (*śamī-garbha aśvattha*) thus points to Agni deposited in the womb of Waters or *Āpaḥ* or Soma of the Parameshthī, i e. the Agnīshoma principle acting conjointly (*avindannu darśatam apsvantar devāso agnim,* III. 1 3) Agni is also named *apām-napāt.*

The implication of the *mantra* is that those who pay particular attention to Soma and its abode the Parameshthī and keep their lives in tune with the Infinite or the Universal attain to internal peace and happiness of mind (*ete śamībhiḥ suśamī abhūvan,* X. 27 12) Life is a kind of mysterious Fire (*Prāṇāgni*) which glares up by the showers of immortal Soma

ऋग्वेद १०।२७

१-२४ वसुक्र ऐन्द्र । इन्द्र । त्रिष्टुप् ।

असत्सु मे जरितः साभिवेगो यत्सुन्वते यजमानाय शिक्षम् ।
अनाशीर्दामहमस्मि प्रहन्ता सत्यध्वृतं वृजिनायन्तमाभुम् ॥ १ ॥
यदीदहं युधये संनयान्यदेवयून्तन्वा३ शूशुजानान् ।
अमा ते तुम्रं वृषभं पचानि तीव्रं सुतं पञ्चदशं निषिञ्चम् ॥ २ ॥
नाहं तं वेद य इति ब्रवीत्यदेवयून्त्समरणे जघन्वान् ।
यदावाख्यत्समरणमृघावदादिद्ध मे वृषभा प्र ब्रुवन्ति ॥ ३ ॥
यदज्ञातेषु वृजनेष्वासं विश्वे सतो मघवानो म आसन् ।
जिनामि वेत्क्षेम आ सन्तमाभुं प्र तं क्षिणा पर्वते पादगृह्य ॥ ४ ॥
न वा उ मां वृजने वारयन्ते न पर्वतासो यदहं मनस्ये ।
मम स्वनात्कृधुकर्णो भयात एवेदनु द्यून्किरणः समेजात् ॥ ५ ॥ [१५]
दर्शन्न्वत्र शृतपाँ अनिन्द्रान्बाहुक्षदः शरवे पत्यमानान् ।
घृषुं वा ये निनिदुः सखायमध्यू न्वेषु पवयो ववृत्युः ॥ ६ ॥
अभूर्वौक्षीर्व्यु१ आयुरानड् दर्षन्नु पूर्वो अपरो नु दर्षत् ।
द्वे पवस्ते परि तं न भूतो यो अस्य पारे रजसो विवेष ॥ ७ ॥

गावो यवं प्रयुता अर्यो अक्षन्ता अपश्यं सहगोपाश्चरन्तीः ।
हवा इदर्यो अभित समायन्कियदासु स्वपतिश्छन्दयाते ॥ ८ ॥
सं यद्वयं यवसादो जनानामहं यवाद उर्वज्रे अन्त ।
अत्रा युक्तोऽवसातारमिच्छादथो अयुक्तं युनजद्ववन्वान् ॥ ९ ॥
अत्रेदु मे मंससे सत्यमुक्तं द्विपाच्च यच्चतुष्पात्संसृजानि ।
स्त्रीभिर्यो अत्र वृषणं पृतन्यादयुद्धो अस्य वि भजानि वेद ॥ १० ॥ [१६]
यस्यानक्षा दुहिता जात्वास कस्तां विद्वाँ अभि मन्याते अन्धाम् ।
कतरो मेनिं प्रति तं मुचाते य ईं वहाते य ईं वा वरेयात् ॥ ११ ॥
कियती योषा मर्यतो वधूयोः परिप्रीता पन्यसा वार्येण ।
भद्रा वधूर्भवति यत्सुपेशाः स्वयं सा मित्रं वनुते जने चित् ॥ १२ ॥
पत्तो जगार प्रत्यञ्चमत्ति शीर्ष्णा शिरः प्रति दधौ वरूथम् ।
आसीन ऊर्ध्वामुपसि क्षिणाति न्यङ्ङुत्तानामन्वेति भूमिम् ॥ १३ ॥
बृहन्नच्छायो अपलाशो अर्वा तस्थौ माता विषितो अत्ति गर्भः ।
अन्यस्या वत्सं रिहती मिमाय कया भुवा नि दधे धेनुरूधः ॥ १४ ॥
सप्त वीरासो अधरादुदायन्नष्टोत्तरात्तात्समजग्मिरन्ते ।
नव पश्चातात्स्थिविमन्त आयन्दश प्राक्सानु वि तिरन्त्यश्नः ॥ १५ ॥ [१७]
दशानामेकं कपिलं समानं तं हिन्वन्ति क्रतवे पार्याय ।
गर्भं माता सुधितं वक्षणास्ववेनन्तं तुषयन्ती बिभर्ति ॥ १६ ॥
पीवानं मेषमपचन्त वीरा न्युप्ता अक्षा अनु दीव आसन् ।
द्वा धनुं बृहतीमप्स्वन्तः पवित्रवन्ता चरतः पुनन्ता ॥ १७ ॥
वि क्रोशनासो विष्वञ्च आयन्पचाति नेमो नहि पक्षदर्धः ।
अयं मे देवः सविता तदाह द्र्वन्न इद्वनवत्सर्पिरन्नः ॥ १८ ॥
अपश्यं ग्रामं वहमानमाराद्चक्रया स्वधया वर्तमानम् ।
सिषक्त्यर्यः प्र युगा जनानां सद्यः शिश्ना प्रमिनानो नवीयान् ॥ १९ ॥
एतौ मे गावौ प्रमरस्य युक्तौ मो षु प्र सेधीर्मुहुरिन्ममन्धि ।
आपश्चिदस्य वि नशन्त्यर्थं सूरश्च मर्क उपरो बभूवान् ॥ २० ॥ [१८]
अयं यो वज्रः पुरुधा विवृत्तोऽवः सूर्यस्य बृहतः पुरीषात् ।
श्रव इदेना परो अन्यदस्ति तदव्यथी जरिमाणस्तरन्ति ॥ २१ ॥
वृक्षेवृक्षे नियता मीमयद्गौस्ततो वयः प्र पतान्पूरुषादः ।
अथेदं विश्वं भुवनं भयात इन्द्राय सुन्वदृषये च शिक्षत् ॥ २२ ॥
देवानां माने प्रथमा अतिष्ठन्कृन्तत्रादेषामुपरा उदायन् ।
त्रयस्तपन्ति पृथिवीमनूपा द्वा बृबूकं वहतः पुरीषम् ॥ २३ ॥
सा ते जीवातुरुत तस्य विद्धि मा स्मैतादृगप गूहः समर्ये ।
आविः स्वः कृणुते गूहते बुसं स पादुरस्य निर्णिजो न मुच्यते ॥ २४ ॥

ऋग्वेद १०।२८

(१—१२) १ इन्द्रस्नुपा वसुक्रपत्नी ऋपिका, २, ६, ८, १०, १२, इन्द्रऋषि , ३, ४, ५, ७, ९, ११ वसुक्रऋषिः । २, ६, ८, १०, १२ वसुक्रो देवता, १, ३, ४, ५, ७, ९, ११ इन्द्रो देवता । त्रिष्टुप् ।

विश्वो ह्य१न्यो अरिराजगाम ममेदह श्वशुरो ना जगाम ।
जक्षीयाद्धाना उत सोमं पपीयात्स्वाशित. पुनरस्त जगायात् ॥ १ ॥

स रोरुवद्वृषभस्तिग्मशृङ्गो वर्ष्मन्तस्थौ वरिमन्ना पृथिव्या ।
विश्वेष्वेनं वृजनेपु पामि यो मे कुक्षी सुतसोम. पृणाति ॥ २ ॥

अद्रिणा ते मन्दिन इन्द्र तूयान्त्सुन्वन्ति सोमान्पिबसि त्वमेषाम् ।
पचन्ति ते वृपभाँ अत्सि तेपां पृक्षेण यन्मघवन्हूयमान ॥ ३ ॥

इद सु मे जरितरा चिकिद्धि प्रतीपं शापं नद्यो वहन्ति ।
लोपाश सिंह प्रत्यञ्चमत्सा क्रोष्टा वराहं निरतक्त कक्षात् । ४ ॥

कथा त एतदहमा चिकेतं गृत्सस्य पाकस्तवसो मनीषाम् ।
त्वं नो विद्वा ऋतुथा वि वोचो यमर्धं ते मघवन्क्षेम्या धू ॥ ५ ॥

एवा हि मा तवसं वर्धयन्ति दिवश्चिन्मे बृहत उत्तरा धू ।
पुरू सहस्रा नि शिशामि साकमशत्रुं हि मा जनिता जजान ॥ ६ ॥

एवा हि मा तवसं जज्ञुरुग्रं कर्मन्कर्मन्वृपणमिन्द्र देवा ।
वधीं वृत्रं वज्रेण मन्दसानोऽप व्रज महिना दाशुषे वम् ॥ ७ ॥

देवास आयन्परशूँरबिभ्रन्वना वृश्चन्तो अभि विड्भिरायन् ।
नि सुद्र्वं दधतो वक्षणासु यत्रा कृपीटमनु तद्दहन्ति ॥ ८ ॥

शश. क्षुरं प्रत्यञ्चं जगाराद्रिं लोगेन व्यभेदमारात् ।
बृहन्तं चिदृहते रन्धयानि वयद्वत्सो वृषभं शूशुवान. ॥ ९ ॥

सुपर्ण इत्था नखमा सिपायावरुद्ध परिपदं न सिंह ।
निरुद्धश्चिन्महिषस्तर्ष्यावान् गोधा तस्मा अयथं कर्षदेतत् ॥ १० ॥

तेभ्यो गोधा अयथं कर्षदेतद्ये ब्रह्मण प्रतिपीयन्त्यन्नैः ।
सिम उक्ष्णोऽवसृष्टाँ अदन्ति स्वयं बलानि तन्व शृणाना ॥ ११ ॥

एते शमीभि सुशमी अभूवन्ये हिन्विरे तन्व१ सोम उक्थै ।
नृवद्वदन्नुप नो माहि वाजान्दिवि श्रवो दधिषे नाम वीरः ॥ १२ ॥

10. THE ONE RUDRA AND THE MANY

There is One Rudra, no second—says the Veda .

एक एव रुद्रो न द्वितीयाय तस्थे । (तै० सं० १।८।६।१)

The One is called Sthānu (स्थाणु), the changeless, eternal, transcendent, beyond time and space He is the Unmanifest One ·

अव्यक्तो लिंगमुच्यते । (Linga Purāna, I 3 1)

'The unmanifest from is called Linga' He is the cause of the universe, the seed that sprouts as the World-Tree

The One becomes the Many by His inherent power. In manifestation the One Rudra transforms Himself as the thousand Rudras .

असंख्याताः सहस्राणि ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम् । (Yajurveda, 16 54)

'Innumerable thousands are the Rudras on the face of the earth' In the vast billowy ocean of Infinity, each centre of manifestation called Bhava is Rudra embodied According to the Śiva Mahāpurāna, the innumerable Rudras are the Rudra Ganas, representing his mind-born creation (मानसी सृष्टि, वायवीय संहिता, ch 14).

The One Rudra is the absolute and the Rudra-Gaṇas or Pramathas are his immanent powers. The One becoming the Many is the true nature of creation. Originally Śakti is one ; on the plane of creation she becomes manifold It is the one Energy that is in the language of Veda called Aditi—the Infinite Mother. She is the embodiment of Continuity,—imperishable because space and time cannot modify her existence

The same Energy (Śakti) becomes fragmented, i e. Diti, the mother of Asuras, the principle of Discontinuity She is manifest in each individual centre as Mātṛikā, a Mother representing the generative principle.

Aditi is the mother of the Devas, symbolising the principle of light and immortality Diti is its opposite principle of darkness, death and disintegration

The active principle of individuation is symbolised as Daksha. Each generative process is a Yajña of which the presiding genius is Daksha Prajāpati. If Daksha is hostile to Rudra, his yajña is doomed. Without Śiva, Daksha is in the grip of death Śiva is the cosmic principle of immortality —Amṛitam

True yajña is the symbol of divinity or Amṛitam Daksha suffers decapitation at the hands of Rudra When he propitiates Śiva, he is united to the immortal

principle called Aja, the Unborn, symbolically represented as the Aja or Goat's head of Daksha. Aja is the same as Aja Ekapād (अज एकपाद्), the first and foremost of the Eleven Rudras, the single immortal Essence called Ekam (अजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम्, Rigveda, I. 164·6) He is one-footed, i e स्थाणु, the principle of *sthiti* or stasis पाद or foot means motion. एकपाद् signifies the absence of all motion and centrifugal forces, i. e. the locking of all forces in the centre, or the absence of extrovert movement. Rudra as अजैकपाद् देव is स्थाणु, the Motionless One. By means of the Tāndava dance He releases the vortex of motion and becomes the Many. In the words of the Linga Purāna (I 106 25-26) the dance is the ambrosial potion which Divine Lord Śiva releases for His consort, Devī Umā or Śakti

Rudra as one of the great gods is called Mahādeva the Supreme Deity, and identified with Agni He is also Indra, and the Sun, conceived of as an aspect of Agni in heaven. In the cosmogony of the Veda and the Purānas the Waters are fecundated by the seed of Agni or Rudra . आपो गर्भं यस्य शुभ्रं धरिश्य. । (Hariv. II 72 30) Agni is frequently referred to in the Rigveda as अपा गर्भः (RV III 5 3) The Vaiśvānara Agni has entered the womb of Waters :

वैश्वानरो यास्वग्निः प्रविष्टस्ता आपो देवीरिह मामवन्तु ।
(ऋ० ७।४९।४)

Speaking of Viśvakarmā Prajāpati, it is said in the Rigveda

परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्या परो देवेभिरसुरैर्यदस्ति ।
कं स्विद् गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवा समपश्यन्त विश्वे ॥
(ऋ० १०।८२।५)

'That which is earlier than this earth and heaven, before the Asuras and Gods had being,—What was the germ primeval which the waters received where all the Gods were seen together' ? (Griffiths).

The Waters here represent the principle of Virāj, also called Parameshthī, the same as Rita (ऋतमेव परमेष्ठि, तै० ब्रा० १।५।१।१), and Mahat of the Gītā (मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म, १४।३). It is the पारमेष्ठ्य सोम or the Universal substratum of Primordial matter (प्रधान प्रकृति) that is quickened into creative activity by the seed of Svayambhū Prajāpati Svayambhū is Agni, the Father depositing his seed in the Parameshṭhī, the Universal, spoken of as the Mother. They typify the Cosmic Parents स्वयम्भू is अग्नि and परमेष्ठी is सोम, the latter represents the Infinite Ocean of Energy (समुद्र) which remains in equanimity in the beginning, but becomes quickened by the seed of the

self-existent Creator into universal creation (भुवनस्य रेत). The two generative Principles अग्नि and सोम bear several other names.

1	अग्नि	सोम	8.	गर्भ	आप:
2.	स्वयम्भू	परमेष्ठी	9	बीजप्रदपिता	महद्ब्रह्म
3.	सत्य	ऋत	10.	पुरुष	प्रकृति
4.	पिता	माता	11	रुद्र-शिव	उमा-पार्वती
5.	द्यौ	पृथिवी	12.	वृषा-नर	योषा-नारी
6	रेतस्	योनि	13.	आभु	तुच्छ्य (अभ्व)
7	तपस्	समुद्र	14.	अंगिरस्	भृगु

Manifesting in the above dual aspects, they posses a common womb and unite to beget the Babe or Boy that is called the Prāna or Vaiśvānara The Mahābhārata gives a clear exposition of this symbolism

अग्नीषोमौ कथं पूर्वमेकयोनी प्रवर्तितौ । (शान्ति पर्व, अ० ३२९।१)

In reply to this, it is said there

तम एव पुरस्ताद् अभवद् विश्वरूपम् । सा विश्वस्य जननीत्येवमस्यार्थोऽनुभाष्यते ।

तस्येदानी तम संभवस्य पुरुषस्य. नेत्राभ्यामग्नीषोमौ ससर्ज । ततो भूतसर्गे प्रवृत्ते प्रजाक्रमवशाद् ब्रह्मक्षत्रमुपातिष्ठत् ।
य. सोमस्तद् ब्रह्म.. योऽग्निस्तत् क्षत्रम् । स चाग्निर्ब्रह्म । (शान्तिपर्व, मोक्षधर्म, ३२९।१४-६)

In the *ante principium* stage both Father Agni & Mother Soma, act as a single pair , both are referred to as तमस्

तम आसीत्तमसा गूढमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छेय्नाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत् तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ।। नासदीयसूक्त, ऋ० १०।१२९।३

In the beginning there was Darkness (i. e Svayambhū, the Father Principle), concealed by Darkness (i e Paramesthī, the Mother Principle) The universe (इदं सर्वम्) stood as an indiscriminate Chaos (सलिल) The vast creative principle (आभु) was enveloped by formless void (तुच्छ्य) Then through the might of Tapas was produced the principle of Individual Manifestation (एकम्).

The principle of सलिलं is the same as आप, variously called समुद्र, सोम, ऋत, and परमेष्ठी It is primordial Matter, the unformed void The principle of Tapas, Heat or Agni first makes its appearance on the substratum of that nebulous mass and itself becomes the seed to quicken or impregnate it for cosmic creation It gives birth to centres of individual manifestation Such points of individuation are referred to as *Ekam* or *Manas*–the Individual Mind— , the first mental or conscious construct of the universe. This controls a vortex of energy and begins to regulate a determined mass of matter.

This integrated system of manifestation is termed as *Yajña*, which comprises in a unified and conjoint manner the Trinitarian principle of manifestation, diversely enunciated as मन-प्राण-वाक्, अग्नि-इन्द्र-सोम, ऋक्-यजु-साम, अव्यय-अक्षर-क्षर, पर-परावर-अवर, स्वयम्भू-सूर्य-पृथिवी, etc.

In the language of science we designate it as the Potential, the Kinetic, the Thermal—the three forms of one and the same primal Energy. Energy is Warmth or Temperature, which is called *Tapas* or *Agni*. Its first manifestation is witnessed against the substratum of सोम or आप:—

अग्ने अपा समिध्यसे दुरोणे नित्यः सूनो सहस. जातवेद. । (ऋ० ३।२५।५)

'In the Flood's home, art thou enkindled, Agni Jātavedas, the eternal Son of Energy' (Rv III 25 5). The principle of the Primal Flood (Soma or Āpah) is spoken of as the Mother (अम्बा, अम्बिका, जनित्री, माता) and Agni is called अपा गर्भ., the Child of the Flood, a favourite epithet in the Rigveda, which is borrowed in the Purānas, in the form of varying symbols.

In the case of Śiva, the symbol of आप. or सोम is उमा पार्वती, and the composite form of अर्धनारीश्वर is the same as that of अग्नीषोमौ, both representing a single progenitive principle (एकयोनी) as stated in the Śāntiparvan. In order to understand the full symbolism of Agni, we should remember the following equation,

अग्नि = ब्रह्म = सूर्य = रुद्र = अक्षर

The characteristic feature of each is movement, pulsation, activity, i. e प्राणन-अपानन or समंचन-प्रसारण, the dynamic rhythum of expansion and contraction

RUDRA-ŚIVA AS YATI

The Harivamśa II. 72, 3 refers to an important Vedic symbolism, viz the principle of Yati and the Sālāvṛikas :

शालावृकान्यो यतिरूपो निजघ्ने दत्तानिन्द्रेण प्रणुदो हितानाम् ।

Who is the archetypal single Yati, and who constitute his retinue of numerous Yatis? Who are Sālāvṛikas and why are they so named? What is the significance of the Yatis with respect to Indra and Rudra? These queries have a bearing on an ancient cosmogonic myth of the Rigveda :

त्वमिन्द्र सालावृकान्त्सहस्रमासन् दधिषे अश्विना ववृत्या । (ऋ० १०।७३।३)

'Thousand hyenas in thy mouth thou holdest, O Indra.
Mayest thou turn the Aśvins hither'.

The Indra and the Sālāvṛika motif is repeated in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā, VI 2. 7. 5; Atharvaveda, II 27. 5, Tāndya Brāhmana, VIII 1 4, XIII. 4. 17, XIV 11 28 XVIII 1. 9, XIX 4 7; and Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VII 28. Esoterically it refers to the Self-existent One and the manifestation of the many from that One, to the undifferentiated Ocean of Infinity and its endless fragmentation on the plane of creational activity. Each Sālāvṛika is a lopped off morsel of life-energy (Prāna), i e. an individual unit of discontinuity

Śiva is the great Yati or Yogī, the lord of ascetics (यतिरूप.), the same as एकर्षि and यम of the Yajurveda (40. 16, Kānva recension Īśa Upanishad) The resplendant Sun in the heavens is the archetypal Yogī or Yati, with his space-encompassing mass of matted-locks in the form of tawny rays (व्योमकेश, पिंगलजट) This Yama Yati, Yogī is the regulating principle for the evolution of the ordered cosmos, it is the emergence of the system from out of the disorderly nebulous mass preceding it. It is the first settling of the principle of Yajña, the world of Devas against the dark region of the Asuras The Asuras represent the riotous forces which leap and dart in the primeval ocean of disrupted energy Āsuric forces are also symbolically spoken of as Vṛitra Ahi, the hissing vipers loosening and stretching out their coiled masses as creation takes place Regular creation is preceded by an elemental struggle between angelic and titanic powers, interlocked with each other, and out of their cosmic convulsion emerges finally the triumphant procession of the ethereal forces, the Devas, over the chthonic dark powers called the Asuras.

Against the background of the primeval violent movements of disorder, what the Purāna writers call क्षोभ or मन्थन, that which is thrown up as the focal point of orderly motion is the Sun-सूर्यं, also called इन्द्र and रुद्र. (अत्रा समुद्र आगूह्ळ सूर्यमजभर्तन Rigveda X 72 7). Sūrya is verily the perfection of creational activity and of Nature's aesthetic endeavour (कल्याणतम तेजस्):

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि ।
योऽसावसौ पुरुष सोऽहमस्मि । (ईश उ० १६)

The Sun is the offspring of Prajāpati, the Nourisher (Pūshā), the Supreme Rishi or Yati, the over-all Controller (Yama) The expansion and contraction of his rays is his rhythm, his fairest form to behold.

'He' is the cosmic person and 'I' is the individual—they both belong to the same Akshara, or the principle of cosmising pulsation

Surya is the same as Indra (cf द्यौरिन्द्रेण गर्भिणी ; इन्द्र. सूर्यमरोचयत, ऋ० ८।३।६). Indra and Indrāṇī are said to be the two aspects of one Person, the former symbolised in the right eye and the latter his consort in the left They are the positive and

negative, the cathode and anode of a single life-function (Maitri Up. VII 11) इन्द्र-इन्द्राणी pair of the Veda is the same as रुद्र-रुद्राणी in the Purānas , both are equivalent to अग्नीषोम. Rudra is Agni and Rudrānī is Soma ,

अहमग्निर्महातेजाः सोमश्चैषा महाम्बिका । अहमग्निश्च सोमश्च प्रकृत्या पुरुषः स्वयम् ॥
(लिंग पु० १।३।४।७)

Also—

अग्निरित्युच्यते रौद्री घोरा या तेजसी तनुः । सोम. शक्तोऽमृतमय· शक्ते शान्तिकरी तनु ॥
(शिवमहापुराण, वायवीयसंहिता २८।३)

As stated in the मोक्षधर्म पर्व—

अपि हि पुराणे भवति । एकयोन्यात्मकावग्नीषोमौ । देवाश्चाग्निमुखा इति । एकयोनित्वाच्च परस्परं महयन्तो लोकान् धारयत इति । (शान्तिपर्व ३२८।५)

Agni is of terrific nature (*raudra, ghora*) when it repels Soma, as in the case of Rudra estranged from Satī Agni-Rudra is then an aspect of death (*Mrityu, Kāla*) The plant in the grip of death, even if watered, does not retain its life sap But Agni becomes life-giving and bestower of immortality (*amritamaya*) when it is reconciled to Soma Śiva wedded to Pārvati becomes androgynous (अर्धनारीनरवपु). Rudra and Satī repel , Śiva and Pārvati attract each other

Agni as Sūrya, Rudra and Indra represents the principle of Yama, the focus round which life spins out in an ever-expanding vortex , it is the सप्ततन्तु यज्ञ measuring out its web

THE YATIS

Śiva has two aspects—He is One and the Many As One, He is एको रुद्रो न द्वितीयाय तस्थे. As many, He is a hundred-thousand Rudras (असंख्याता सहस्राणि ये रुद्रा अधि भूम्याम्). As the One Supreme Ascetic, He is fixed and changeless (स्थाणु) i e beyond all the modifications of time and space As such he is unmanifest and does not create For creation, the One Yati transforms himself into many

यद्देवा अदः सलिले सुसंरब्धा अतिष्ठत । अत्रा वो नृत्यतामिव तीव्रो रेणुरजायत (RV X 72 6)
यद्देवा यतयो यथा भुवनान्यपिन्वत । अत्रा समुद्र आगूह्ळमा सूर्यमजभर्तन ॥ (RV X 72 6)

Each universe (भुवन) is the mass formed by the spinning and dancing movement of the Yati-like Devas or the Divine Ascetics. This dance is performed on the surface of the primeval ocean; out of the dance they discover the Sun. The controlling principle in the formation of the worlds is इन्द्र or सूर्य, the Supreme God, and Rudra the Supreme Yati

इन्द्रे ह विश्वा भुवनानि येमिरे । (RV VIII, 3. 6)

The Cosmic powers, the Devas, dance like the whirling Yatis and bring forth the Sun. It is the dance of Yogī Śiva, his Tāndava with the whole team of Rudras, Ganas and Pramathas (लिंग पु० १।१०।६।२५). He who is One Rudra manifests as the team of Eleven Rudras (एकादश रुद्राः) for creative activity. As One He is Unborn (Aja) with one foot, called अजैकपाद् . The One-footed Deity is truly स्थाणु, that which exists without movement :

अजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम् । (RV. I. 164. 6)

Indra has his troop of the Seven Maruts, Rudra of Eleven Rudras and Sūrya of Twelve Ādityas. Each constitutes a Gana moving in tune with its chief. These are the Yatis, the 'ascetic hordes' who play an essential part in the *repertoire* of creational symbolism. The Yatis were mythologically believed to be 'an ancient race of ascetics connected with the Bhṛigus, and according to one legend, said to have taken part in the creation of the world' (Griffith, Rigveda, VIII, 3. 9, f n.). The birth of the Eleven Rudras and from them again the generation of the myraids of Rudras are essential elements in the creative process of the One becoming the many

These Rudras are sometimes spoken of as emanations of Rudra himself and sometimes as having been created by Brahmā from the body of the cosmic Cow called Surabhi (Harivamśa Purāna, III, 14 39-41 , Linga Purāṇa, I. 22 23-25). The list of names is also varied (Matsya, 5, 29-30, 153. 19 , Linga, I, 82, 49 41 ; Bhavishya Purāna, Brahma Parva, 125, 7).

These Rudras are the primal Yatis of creation. अजैकपाद् is the same as अज or अव्यय पुरुष. अहिर्बुध्न्य is the same as वृत्र or त्रित आप्त्य. विरूपाक्ष is the same as त्वष्टा essential for fashioning of forms (cf. त्वष्टा रूपाणि पिंशतु). रैवत connected with रेवती or पूषा is essential for gathering of the gross material elements. Others like सावित्र, त्र्यम्बक, जयन्त, अपराजित are but symbols of the different principles that operate in the creative process. The Sāvitra Rudra typifies the propelling power transmitted to the individual centre The Tryambaka represents the trinitarian principle of generation as Mind, Life and Matter. Jayanta is the war-like hero, and Aparājita is he who triumphs against the Asuras The Purānas are explicit in stating that these Rudras are but archetypes By themselves they were unable to create the animal forms Thereupon Śiva created out of himself his female energy Śiva-Pārvatī then became the universal parents. The Universe of Rudra is called the Rodasī (रोदसी), in which the law of male and female is operative Therein द्यौः is the Father and पृथिवी is the Mother. All species of living creatures within the womb of the Rodasī are under the control of Agni-Soma union of the two

parents. The एकादश रुद्राः give birth by differentiation to millions and billions of Rudras, but each is the offspring of these Two Parents Each has its mouth or assimilation in the form of Vaiśvānara Fire. The Vaiśvānara is the bodily Fire, the metabolic force possessing the essential characteristic of assimilation and elimination :

वैश्वानरमुखाः सर्वे विश्वरूपाः कपर्दिनः। नीलकण्ठाः शितग्रीवास्तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्रास्त्रिलोचनाः ॥ ३१५ ॥
विभज्य बहुधात्मानं जरामृत्युविवर्जिताः। क्रीडन्ते विविधैर्भावैर्भोगान्प्राप्य सुदुर्लभान् ॥ ३१६ ॥
एकादशानां रुद्राणां कोट्योऽनेका महात्मनाम् ॥ ३२० ॥
एभिः सह महात्मानो देवदेवो महेश्वरः। भक्तानुकम्पनो भगवान्मोदते पार्वतीप्रियः ॥ ३२१ ॥
(वायु पु० अ० १०१)

In Vedic symbolism we have the formula :

यतयः = मुनयो वातरशनाः = सप्त ऋषयः = असत्प्राणाः ।

The Yatis are the Prānic forces, which start those whirling movements that tend to evolve individuating centres They are girdled by Vāta or the Maruts, viz. the Seven Prānas that are associated with each Indra or मध्य प्राण As वातरशना मुनयः they are like young boys who have not yet donned the robe The robe is the enveloping principle, that which gives birth to विवस्वान्, or the Sun as the archetype of manifestation.

In the Purānas these Munis tread the path of निवृत्ति. They are created by Brahmā as सन, सनक, सनन्दन, सनातन, सनत्कुमार, सनत्सुजात and कपिल.

They retire to the forest and do not enter the householder's life. Thereupon Prajāpatī creats another host of Seven Sages, viz. मरीचि, अंगिरा, अत्रि, पुलस्त्य, पुलह, क्रतु, वशिष्ट (शान्ति० 327. 61-65)

According to the Śatapatha these primal Rishis are only forms of Prānic energy and as such are called Asat, in contradistinction to the Bhūtas which are Sat We have here three successive principles, viz. Asat, Rishi and Prāna The three are inter-related or virtually different forms of one and the same principle, viz the Vital Airs as Yatis. Toil (श्रम) and Austerity (तपस्) are the Yati's way for creative endeavour ; they wear themselves out (अरिषन्), with whirling movements as a troupe of dancers. The Yatis are essential in the scheme of creative movement. There are seven Devas whom Aditi generated

सप्तभिः पुत्रैरदितिरुपप्रैत्पूर्व्यं युगम् । (ऋ० १०।७२।९)

Each Deva has a Yati or Muni associate to complete his creative work

मुनिर्देवस्य देवस्य सौकृत्याय सखा हितः । (ऋ० १०।१३६।४)

As one, this Muni of matted locks is the same as Rudra-Śiva, called Dhūrjaṭi But in his manifold from He becomes Sapta-Muni or Ekādaśa-Rudra. This Yati is called देवेषित (ऋ० १०।१३६।५), i e. impelled or inspired by the gods. As Mahādeva, the gods wait upon Him and adore Him.

The matted locks are his rays, or radiation, also called प्रवर्ग्य or उच्छिष्ट, the element separated from Him and utilised in the creative process.

THE SĀLĀVRIKAS

Indra cast away the Yatis to the Sālāvṛikas. This was a Vedic motif. In the Purāṇa it is said that Śiva as the great Yati vanquished the Śālāvṛikas, which had been created by Indra as quickeners of differents units (हितानां प्रणुदः) and made them over to Rudra (Harivamśa, II 72-31). This is reminiscent of the Ṛigveda, येना यतिभ्यो भृगवे धने हिते (VIII 3 9), i. e Indra assigns to the Yatis the function of the individul distribution of treasures, where धन is the same as Vasu, and धनेहिते is equal to वसुधान (cf. रत्नधातम function of Agni), referring to the creation of each new life with the help of Vasus, who comprise the triple principles of Life, Mind and Matter.

सालावृक of the Rigveda is the same as शालावृक of the Purāṇas. शाला is a house (गृह, दम) and each human body is treated as an abode in which प्राण or Life resides as a guest and waxes (वर्धमानं स्वे दमे ऋ० १।१।८ ; जुष्टो दमूना अतिथिर्दुरोणे, ऋ० ५।४।५ ; स दर्शतश्रीरतिथिर्गृहे, ऋ० १०।६१।२)

Life-Principle is spoken of as a lion (सिंह), a tiger (व्याघ्र), or a hyena (सालावृक). These are the royal beasts of the foreset, feeding on flesh and blood Food eaten is converted by the bodily fire into secretions and one of them is blood. Blood is the symbol *par excellence* of Life, or Prāna, the Rajas or Akshara functioning in the body The colour of Rajas is red, and so is that of blood, the secretion rich in red corpuscles. It is the solar rays that transmit the ruddy element to the blood.

The lion is the animal feeding on the sap of life, the blood. The bodies of all creatures or animals are made of the five material elements of which earth is the most conspicuous. Life consists in the miracle of blood flowing into the arteries and veins and saturating the body with rejuvenative potency.

भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्स्वित् । (ऋ० १।१६४।४)

'What is the source of the blood of earth, the life, the spirit ?' This biological query holds the key to the mystery of life. The conversion of water into

blood, and of blood into the seed that creates life, and of that seed again into mind—these are the arch mysteries. The principle of energy within each body feeding on the blood of the earth is metaphorically spoken of as the Lion, which is the same as the Hyena from the point of view of symbolism. Both feed on blood or the life-sap. Both live in the forest and are friendly to the Yati or the forest recluse. The lion is an attendant of Śiva.

कैलासगौरं वृषमारुरुक्षोः पादार्पणानुग्रहपूतपृष्ठम् ।
अवेहि मा किंकरमष्टमूर्ते. कुम्भोदरं नाम निकुंभमित्रम् ।। (रघु० २।३५)

Of the Ashtamūrtis of Śiva, i. e Mind Life, Matter (मन-प्राणापान-पंचभूत), the five gross elements are symbolised by the lion He is a manifestation of Śiva, and the whole fraternity of lions (known as मायाराहस्रं सिहाना, Vāyu 101 291) chained to the pillars in the shrines of Śiva, represent so many manifestations of Rudra. Agni-Rudra has transformed himself as so many lions or hyenas :—

यद्वै सहस्रं सिहानामीश्वरेण महात्मना । व्यपनीय स्वकाद्देहात्क्रोधास्ते सिहविग्रहा. ।।
वैश्वानरमयै. पाशै: संरुद्धास्तु पृथक् पृथक् । (वायु० १०१ २६४-२६५)

Thus each centre of individuation is a lion or hyena feeding on blood and flesh. The Yatis are also forms of Rudra, the innumerable turning spirals or vortices of one basic energy, which is symbolically the same as so many Ganas or Pramathas of Rudra of every conceivable form They are together known as the Śata-Rudras. Each human or animal body is the abode of one Yati, or one Rudra, or his servant one Simha, or one Sālāvṛika. The One cosmic divine energy of Rudra becomes divided into the many Rudras or Sālāvṛikas Each of these hyenas holds in his mouth the triple Yatis, i. e. the tripartite life-principle of Manas, Prāṇa and Vāk, i. e. Mind, Life and Matter.

11 ASHṬAMŪRTI ŚIVA (अष्टमूर्ति शिव)

Kālidāsa refers to Śiva under the name of Ashtamūrti:

अवेहि मा किंकरमष्टमूर्तेः कुम्भोदरं नाम निकुम्भमित्रम् । (रघुवंश २।३५)

In the first verse of the Mālavikāgnimitra he refers to these eight forms of Śiva more explicity:

अष्टाभिर्यस्य कृत्स्नं जगदपि तनुभिर्बिभ्रतो नाभिमानः ।

These eight forms are enumerated in the invocation to the Abhijñāna-Śākuntala drama:

या सृष्टिः स्रष्टुराद्या वहति विधिहुतं या हविर्या च होत्री ये द्वे कालं विधत्तः श्रुतिविषयगुणा या स्थिता व्याप्य विश्वम् ।
यामाहुः सर्वबीजप्रकृतिरिति यया प्राणिनः प्राणवन्तः प्रत्यक्षाभिः प्रपन्नस्तनुभिरवतु वस्ताभिरष्टाभिरीशः ॥

In the light of this verse the eight *manifest* (प्रत्यक्ष) forms of Śiva are as follows:

1. या सृष्टिः स्रष्टुराद्याः—This refers to आपः, Water, as produced by Prajāpati in the beginning of creation (अप एव ससर्जादौ तासु बीजमवासृजत्, Manu,) आप, अम्भस्, सलिलं, समुद्राः, ऋतं—all these were regarded more or less as synonymous concepts and described with great elaboration in the hymns of the Rigveda. The Waters as the primeval Mother gave birth to Agni (तमिद् गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवाः समगच्छन्त विश्वे, Ṛig. X. 82. 6).

2. वहति विधिहुतं हविर्या—This refers to Agni as the bearer of oblations offered in the yajñas.

3. या च होत्री—This refers to the sacrificer (*Yajamāna*) who offers oblations. The होत्री is also called दीक्षित or ब्राह्मण, since it is he who as यजमान becomes initiated in the Yajña.

4-5. ये द्वे कालं विधत्तः—This refers to the Sun and the Moon, the two gods regulating time as the year and the months.

6. श्रुतिविषयगुणा या स्थिता व्याप्य विश्वम्—This refers to the all-pervading Ākāśa, having *śabda* as its attribute.

7. यामाहुः सर्वबीजप्रकृतिरिति—This refers to Earth as the mother of all the seeds, which are its modifications.

8. यया प्राणिनः प्राणवन्तः—This refers to Air, which is the obvious source of Breath.

The above eight forms are clearly divisible into three categories, viz (a) the Five Gross elements, (b) Sun-& Moon, and (c) Hotrī These eight are specifically stated to be instrumental in manifestation Wherever there is a "body" or concrete organism enshrining Life, the above eight forms must be essentially present there. The aggregation of these eight represents the immutable law of manifestation.

In Vedic terminology these eight forms correspond to the eight Vasus. Why are the Vasus so called ? To this question, the answer is—

एते हीदं सर्वं वासयन्ते । ते यदिद ँ सर्वं वासयन्ते तस्माद्वसव इति । (शतपथ ११।६।३।६),

इदं सर्वं means the created cosmos, 'This all", as in ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् The whole world with all its individual objects takes form or visible shape through the agency of the Vasus, and hence the latter are so named. What these Eight Vasus are, is also recounted in the same passage .

कतमे वसव इति । अग्निश्च पृथिवी च वायुश्चान्तरिक्षं चादित्यश्च द्यौश्च चन्द्रमाश्च नक्षत्राणि चैते वसवः ।
(शतपथ ११।६।३।६)

Here Pṛithivī, Agni, Vāyu, D yauh, Sūrya and Chandra are clearly named, but अन्तरिक्ष and नक्षत्राणि do not seem to tally with the list of Kālidāsa. As a matter of fact अन्तरिक्ष stands for आप:, since the waters are stored up in the air's mid-region before they fall to the earth ·

अन्तरिक्षं वाऽअपां ँ सधस्थम् । (शतपथ ७।५।२।५७)

Similary नक्षत्र is 'that which is not क्षत्र', an etymology approved by Pānini VI 3 75, forming the word not from the root नक्ष but with the negative particle added before क्षत्र. क्षत्र is temporal power, the opposite of which is ब्रह्म, referring to spiritual authority Therefore नक्षत्राणि of the above list of the eight Vasus stands for ब्रह्म, as is also clearly stated in another Vedic text :

ब्रह्मणो वा अष्टाविंशो नक्षत्राणाम् । (तैत्तिरीय ब्रा० १।५।३।४)

Of the above eight forms of Śiva or the Vasus, there are three groups representing the three principal elements of manif estation They are :

I. भूतमात्रा = पृथिवी, जल, तेज, वायु, आकाश,

II. प्राणमात्रा = सूर्यचन्द्र, symbolising प्राणापान, the hot and cold aspects of the same vital power.

III. प्रज्ञामात्रा = मनस् also called यजमान or दीक्षित ब्राह्मण in the Purāṇas.

According to the Śatapath, मनो वै यज्ञस्य ब्रह्मा (XIV 6. 1. 7), and also मनो यजमानस्य रूपम् (XII. 8. 2. 4).

Just as the Yajamāna is the focal centre round whom the sacrifice is organised, similarly *Manas* is the primary principle, the first-born of the cosmic order :

तपसस्तन्महिजायतैकम् । (Rv X. 129. 3)
कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् । (Rv. X. 129. 4)

The mind forms the individuating centre in the lap of the universal or Parameshthī, and thus commences the cosmic Yajña. It is the primary principle to take root in the process of manifestion, from which all else sprouts.

The Purānas designate the यजमान as दीक्षित ब्राह्मण—

आत्मा तस्याष्टमी मूर्तिर्यजमानाह्वया परा । दीक्षितं ब्राह्मणं प्राहुरात्मनं च मुनीश्वराः ॥
(लिंग पुराण II 12. 43-44)

They in fact provide a new version of the ancient Kumāravidyā which had its root in Vedic thought and was much elaborated in the Brāhmanas Within each organism where Life becomes manifest there inheres a sleeping Babe (अयं वाव शिशुर्योऽयं मध्यमः प्राण, बृ० उ० २।२।१). The pulsation of life is conceived of as the awakening of this 'Wonderful Child' (चित्रशिशु, Rv X. 1.2) which is also graphically described as his weeping (रोदन, Śatapatha VI 3. 1. 10) This child is Agni, also identified with Rudra :

यो वै रुद्रः सोऽग्नि. (शतपथ ५।२।४।१३) । एष रुद्रो यदग्निः (तैत्तिरीय ब्रा० १।१।५।८–९) ।

Why was Agni called Rudra ? The reason lies in the etymology of रुद्र—यदरोदीत् तस्माद्रुद्रः, i e. Agni becomes afflicated with hunger (अशनाया) for Soma which is its food, and this is comparable to the crying of the child for food (Śatapatha, VI 1. 3 10). Both become quiet when satiated, but that is only temporary, and the need for food returns again and again so long as life lasts. Agni is अन्नाद and Soma is अन्न; deprived of सोम Agni becomes घोर, whereas provided with सोम it becomes शिव,

In the Brāhmanas Agni is said to have eight names·

तान्येतानि अष्टौ (रुद्रः शर्वः पशुपतिः उग्र अशनिः भव महान् देव. ईशान.) अग्निरूपाणि । कुमारो नवमः ।
(शतपथ ६।१।३।१८)

These correspond to the eight forms of Śiva mentioned earlier The Mārkandeya Purāna has the following verses ·

प्रादुरासीदथाङ्केऽस्य कुमारो नीललोहित । रुरोद सुस्वरं सोऽथ द्रवंश्च द्विजसत्तम ॥ ३ ॥
किं रोदिषीति तं ब्रह्मा रुदन्तं प्रत्युवाच ह । नाम देहीति तं सोऽथ प्रत्युवाच जगत्पतिम् ॥ ४ ॥
रुद्रस्त्वं देव नाम्नासि मा रोदीर्धैर्यमावह । एवमुक्तस्ततः सोऽथ सप्तकृत्वो रुरोद ह ॥ ५ ॥

ततोऽन्यानि ददौ तस्मै सप्त नामानि वै प्रभुः । स्थानानि चैषामष्टाना पत्नीः पुत्राश्च वै द्विज ।। ६ ।।
भवं शर्वं तथेशानं तथा पशुपतिं प्रभुः । भीममुग्रं महादेवमुवाच स पितामहः ।। ७ ।।
चक्रे नामान्यथैतानि स्थानान्येषाञ्चकार ह । सूर्यो जलं मही वह्निर्वायुराकाशमेव च ।। ८ ।।
दीक्षित ब्राह्मणो सोम इत्येतास्तनवः क्रमात् ।। ९ ।। (मार्क० पु० अध्याय ५२)

(1) शर्व–पृथिवी मूर्ति [= सद्योजात]
(2) भव–जलमूर्ति [= वामदेव]
(3) रुद्र–अग्निमूर्ति [= अघोर]
(4) उग्र–वायुमूर्ति [= तत्पुरुष]
(5) भीम–आकाशमूर्ति [= ईशान]
(6) महादेव–चन्द्रमूर्ति
(7) ईशान–सूर्यमूर्ति
(8) पशुपति–यजमानमूर्ति

The eight names of Agni and the eight forms of Śiva correspond as follows:

The first five are the gross material elements, the next two represent the equal polarity of प्राण and अपान, and the last one stands for the mind or consciousness. According to the Upanishadic statement the manifested life in the organism comprises three principles.

एतन्मयो वाऽअयमात्मा वाङ्मयो मनोमयः प्राणमयः । (शतपथ १४।४।३।१०)

The वाङ्मय is the same as भूतमय, for वाक् or शब्द is the attribute of आकाश, which is the subtlest of all the material elements and is taken as the symbol of all matter

In modern terms we many understand the eight forms of Siva as follows:

(a) Matter—भूतमात्रा = पृथिवी, जल, तेज, वायु, आकाश
(b) Life—प्राणमात्रा = प्राणापान or सूर्य-चन्द्र
(c) Mind—प्रज्ञामात्रा = मनस्, also called होत्री, यजमान, or दीक्षित ब्राह्मण, ब्रह्मा

All bodies with organised Life are constituted of the five Elements of Matter, energised by the dual vital force of प्राण and अपान, and illumined by the principle of Mind or Consciousness, i e मनस् or बुद्धि or संज्ञा, which is twofold, viz विज्ञान and प्रज्ञान. These three factors coalesced into one, like the three Cities (*Tripura*) pierced by a single shaft of Rudra, make up the manifest form of Ashtamūrti Śiva

The conception of the Ashtamūrti is allied to that of the Śarabha-mūrti Śarabha was believed to be a fabulous animal with eight legs (cf. Meghadūta I 54, on which Mallinātha comments, शरभा अष्टापदमृगविशेषा) It is mentioned

in the Mbh. in an ascending series comprising a dog, a leopard, a tiger, an elephant, a lion and a Śarabha (Śāntiparvan, 117, 33-34. 41-42, also Āraṇyakaparvan 134. 14, Poona edn) The Śarabha was said to be an *Utpādaka* animal, i. e. having four normal feet and four on the back projecting upwards (ऊर्ध्वपादचतुष्टयः, शब्दकल्पद्रुमकोश). Such an animal does not exist in nature ; it was a symbolical conception. Under अष्टमूर्ति the शब्द-कल्पद्रुम makes a significent statement on the authority of the Kālikā Pūrāna that the eight forms of Śiva are the eight feet of his Śarabha incarnation (एता. शरभरूपिशिवस्याष्टपादा. इति कालिकापुराणम्).

Of the अष्टमूर्ति there are two categeries :

(a) Earthly—**पृथिवी–जल–तेज–वायु**

(b) Celestial—**आकाश–प्राण–अपान–मन**

The first four forms are gross and touch the earth or visible creation, as it were. The next four forms are subtle and symbolise the upper feet, pointing to the invisible source of manifestation ऊर्ध्व and अधः are not spatial conceptions, but relative levels of reference, ऊर्ध्व denoting the abstract and secret, and अधः the material visible extension of the world. The Gītā speaking of the ऊर्ध्वमूलम् अधः शाखम् cosmic Aśvattha Tree points to the same meaning The World Tree has its roots in the Divine Essence or Godhead and its branches in the formal manifestation of these worlds.

In cult-worship the Pāśupata teachers translated the अष्टमूर्ति doctrine into the अष्टपुष्पिका ritual, i. e. worshipping Śiva by offering eight handfuls of flowers, and thereby meditating on his eight forms :

पुलिनपृष्ठप्रतिष्ठितसैकतशिवलिंगा च भक्त्या परमया पंचब्रह्मपुरस्सरां सम्यङ् मुद्राबन्धविहितपरिकरां ध्रुवागीतिगर्भाम् अवनि–पवन–दहन–तपन–तुहिनकिरण–यजमानमयीः मूर्ती रष्टावपि ध्यायन्ती सुचिरमष्टपुष्टिकमदात् । (हर्षचरित, प्रथम उच्छ्वास)

The Linga Purāna elaborates the Ashṭamūrti doctrine as an item of the faith of the Pāśupata teachers, and recounts the eight names शर्व, भव, पशुपति, ईशान, भीम, रुद्र, महादेव, उग्र, with a slight transposition as compared to the मार्कण्डेय पुराण list (Linga Purāna, II 13) It places उग्र at the end, identifying the same with आत्मा, यजमान and दीक्षितब्राह्मण—

आत्मा यो यजमानाख्यः सर्वभूतशरीरगः । मूर्तिस्त्वस्य सा ज्ञेया परमात्मबुभुत्सुभिः ।।

(Linga P II. 13 17 and II. 13. 26–27).

Kālidās also refers to the supreme position of उग्र amongst the अष्टमूर्तिs in the Raghuvaṁśa V 4, where the original reading was यतस्त्वया ज्ञानमशेषमाप्तं चैतन्यमुग्रादिव दीक्षितेन, as preserved in the commentaries of Vallabhadeva and Hemādri. Hemādri noticing this says, 'यथोग्राद् दीक्षितेन यजमानेन चेतना प्राप्यते। दीक्षितो हि प्रथमं चेतना जुहोति। पुनरुग्रादनुप्रवेशात्ता भजत इत्यागम.। अष्टमूर्तें. स्वमूर्तिभेदेन नामविभाग.। तद्यथा। सूर्ये रुद्रः। जले भवः। भूमौ शर्वः। वायौ ईशान.। अग्नौ पशुपति.। आकाशे भीम.। दीक्षिते उग्रः। चन्द्रमसि महादेवः। इति दीक्षितस्य उग्र इति संज्ञा।'

12. PURĀṆA-VIDYĀ

The well-known dictum of the Purānic lore is contained in the line इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत् । It gives the key to understand the intimate relationship between the Purānas on the one hand and their sources, the Vedas on the other. The Vedas hold the key to the Purānas. It appears that the two existed side by side In the Vrātya Sūkta of the Atharvaveda mention is made of the Itihāsa-Purāna tradition along with that of the four Vedas. There is also a verse in several Purāṇas :

पुराणं सर्वशास्त्राणां प्रथमं ब्रह्मणा स्मृतम् । अनन्तरं च वक्त्रेभ्यो वेदास्तस्य विनिःसृताः ॥

(Matsya, III 3, 4).

It makes Purāna to be the most ancient or primeval tradition amplified in the Vedas subsequently Brahmā is the source of both of them, i e. either of them owes its origin to an identical source which fulfilled itself through varying media of expression. The Vedas are not texts on history or social conditions; they are a veritable storehouse of cosmic knowledge, Sṛishti Vidyā, the main and foremost topic which is conveyed through a vast and varied symbolism. There is no system in them of dialectic philosophy, but a discipline of metaphysics. Symbols are the language of metaphysics as words are of philosophy The lexical meanings of words are therefore inadequate for the understanding of the Veda; it is essentially the language of symbols that unlocks the real significance of Vedic thought,

Gau, Aśva, Samudra, Āpas, Sūrya, Chandra, Agni, Ratha, Sindhu, Saras, Chamasa, Adri, and hundreds of other such symbols were present in the thought of the Seers and the fullest use of their dynamic symbolism was made by them. The Vedic legends are eloquent with the language of symbolism It is difficult to grasp the full significance of the words unless the symbolical reference is captured and visualised The Vedas aim at expounding—of course in a special technique—so many aspects of cosmology and cosmogony, expressed in terms of *Devas, Lokas, Vāk*, etc.

There are a number of points of view called Vidyās :

अग्निविद्या, सूर्यविद्या, इन्द्रविद्या, मित्रावरुणविद्या, भृग्वंगिरोविद्या, प्रजापतिविद्या, स्वयम्भूविद्या, नारायणविद्या, समुद्रविद्या वाक्-विद्या, परमेष्ठीविद्या, ऋत-सत्यविद्या, तपोविद्या, विश्वकर्मविद्या, यज्ञविद्या, ऋत्विज्-विद्या, देवविद्या, सोमविद्या, त्रिवक्रमविद्या, ब्रह्मविद्या, अश्वत्थविद्या, ब्रह्मौदन-प्रवर्ग्यविद्या, देवरथविद्या, अदितिविद्या, अश्वमेधविद्या, गोविद्या, वसुविद्या, रुद्रविद्या, आदित्यविद्या, संवत्सरविद्या, पुरुषविद्या, वयुनविद्या, लोकविद्या,

चयनविद्या, दर्श-पौर्णमासविद्या, पर्यंकविद्या, हृदयविद्या, स्तोमविद्या, अक्षरविद्या, क्षरविद्या, असुरविद्या, नागविद्या, पुष्करविद्या, वेनविद्या, गन्धर्वविद्या, यक्षविद्या, सलिलविद्या, रात्रिविद्या, अर्णवविद्या, रोदसीविद्या, व्योमविद्या, यमविद्या, पितृविद्या, सूर्याविद्या, मनुविद्या, अम्भोविद्या, अमृत-मृत्युविद्या, सदसद्विद्या, रजोविद्या, परावरविद्या, अहोरात्रविद्या, स्वाहाविद्या, स्वधाविद्या, वषट्कारविद्या, आभु-अभ्वविद्या, सुपर्णविद्या, छन्दोविद्या, प्रमाविद्या, प्रतिमाविद्या, महिमविद्या, शुक्रसृष्टि-विद्या, त्रिपुरविद्या, प्राणविद्या, विराज्-विद्या, ऋषिविद्या, आज्यविद्या, ऋतुविद्या, दक्षविद्या, दक्षिणाविद्या, द्यावा-पृथिवीविद्या, वराहविद्या, शिपिविष्टविद्या, कूर्मविद्या, धर्मविद्या, गुहाविद्या, अजविद्या, तानूनप्त्रविद्या, आप्रीविद्या, तिस्रोदेवीविद्या, आत्मन्वीविद्या, त्वष्टृविद्या, ब्रह्मणस्पतिविद्या, बृहस्पतिविद्या, इध्मविद्या, गायत्रीविद्या, अथर्वविद्या, नाकविद्या, गोपाविद्या, त्रय.केशिनो-विद्या, शाक्वरीविद्या, त्रेताग्निविद्या. गृहमेघ-विद्या, आयुष्टोमविद्या, गोष्टोमविद्या, ज्योतिष्टोमविद्या, गणपतिविद्या, यज्ञ-ओपशविद्या, मरुद्गणविद्या, सप्तस्वसृविद्या, साकंजप्राणविद्या, सप्ततन्तुविद्या, त्रीणिज्योतींषिविद्या, देव्याहोताराविद्या, ग्रहविद्या, राजविद्या, वाजविद्या, दिक्-स्वस्तिकविद्या, पशुविद्या, अग्नीषोमीयविद्या, मातरिश्वविद्या, सरस्वतोविद्या, आम्भृणीविद्या, चमसविद्या, द्रोणकलश-विद्या, उखासंभरणविद्या, उर्वशीविद्या, शकटविद्या, अपराजिताविद्या, चित्रशिशुविद्या, जातवेदविद्या, देवासुरविद्या, पवमानविद्या, इष्-ऊर्ज्-विद्या, सावित्रविद्या, etc An account of these Vidyās is spread in the verses of the Rigveda ; the other Saṁhitās and the Brāhmanas have added much to their clarification and understanding. One ought to be prepared to reckon with a complex but well understood system of symbolism which is the pre-eminent feature of Vedic expression. All these lores have one common objective, *viz.* to explain the cosmic processes of creation and dissolution as witnessed through the triple forms of Life, Mind and Matter. These in the symbolism of the mantras are *Prāṇa-Manas-Vāk* respectively, which constitute the Yajña through the tending of the Three Fires and the invoking of the Three Deities, Agni-Vāyu-Āditya a triad which proceeds out of one common source, the basic fire or Energy—

एक एवाग्निर्बहुधा समिद्धः ।

Agni is the First-born of the Cosmic Order :

अग्निर्हि नः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य (RV X. 5-7).

Agni is the immortal divine Essence amongst mortals :

मर्तेष्वग्निरमृतो नि धायि (RV.VII. 4-4)

अयं होता प्रथम. पश्यतेममिदं ज्योतिरमृतं मर्त्येषु (RV. VI. 9-4.)

स मर्त्येष्वमृतः प्रचेताः (RV VI 5-5)

In the creative process of Life, Agni is being produced every day and every month ·

अहरहर्जायते मासिमास्यथा देवा दधिरे हव्यवाहम् (RV. X 32-3).

Agni Vidyā is the key to all other lores. Each Vidyā is one aspect or point of view of the creative process. It can be verified in the cosmic reference (*Adhi-daivatam*), as well as realised in the individuated aspect of the human body (*Adhyātmam*).

Taken together these Vidyās formed part of the one supreme Vidyā, viz. *Prajāpati-Vidyā* which is the same as *Viśvarūpā-vidyā* or *Srishti-Vidyā*.

When one examines the Purāṇas, one finds that they fulfil the dictum of *Veda-Upabrimhana*, which they had accepted as the over-all ideal of their art. These varied Vidyās of the Veda are together equivalent to *Sarga-Pratisarga* of the Purāna Pañca-Lakshaṇa definition. *Sarga* is creation and *Pratisarga* is dissolution. Both are sides of the same medal, the unfoldment and withdrawal of a single roll, the downward and upside movements of a single wheel, and the expansion and contraction of the same measured rhythm, which is Life or Prāna, defined as प्राणो वै समञ्चन-प्रसारणम् (Śatapatha, VIII 1 4.10).

Cosmization is rhythmization. Life is the outcome of cosmic pulsation, the product of the union of mind and matter A disquisition on the creative process of Life (Prāna) is *Veda-Vidyā, Prajāpati-Vidyā, Yajña-Vidyā* or *Samvatsara-Vidyā* which is the same as *Sūrya-Vidyā* The same truth is probed under several names This is comprehended under the general title of *Sarga-Pratisarga Vidyā* in the Purāṇas It seems that the original Puranic tradition, to which the earliest reference occurs in the Vrātya Sūkta (Atharva, Kāṇḍa XV) was comprised of the *Sarga-Pratisarga* statement which was cast into the form of legends built up by an extensive borrowing or adaptation of the Vedic symbols. An intensive analysis of the existing Purānas in respect of their great legends and their comparison with the Vedic Vidyās offers a revealing commentary. It would require a magnificent study to demonstrate the full truth, of this statement It may do for the present to record some examples.

The Vedic thesis about creation is that the One becomes the Many :

एकं वा इदं वि बभूव सर्वम् ।

The Reality or Essence *ab intra* is One without a second (एकमेवाद्वितीयम्), but becomes manifold (बहुधा) in its creative formulation. The *ante principium* stage is called *Guhā*, (गुहा), the Cave in the Rock, in which the Darkness inheres as the principle of Rest, Stasis or Sleep. This is the same as the legend of *Śesha-śāyi-Vishṇu* Viṣṇu is the supreme deity. He rests on the coils of the Cosmic Dragon, who is *Ananta*, the Infinite substratum of the divine power that becomes active in the cosmos. As stated in the Mārkandeya Purāṇa, goddess *Nidrā*, the principle of Sleep, is invoked by Brahmā in the beginning and when she is expelled from the body of Vishnu, the Deity awakes (Mār. P. 81 53-70)

Vishṇu rests in the great ocean, which conception makes use of the Vedic

symbol of the Samudra, the primeval ocean of energy whose waters become this cosmos. The universe is but one Drop from that infinite source :

द्रप्सश्चस्कन्द (RV. X 17 11)

It has been the moistening source of life through the aeons that were early and that will follow Vishṇu and Ananta are the Avara and Para aspects of the same Reality There are numerous references to the *Parāvara Vidyā* in the Rigveda :

अव. परेण पर एनावरेण (I 164 17).

अव· परेण पितरं यो अस्यानुवेद पर एनावरेण (I. 164.18).

ये अर्वाञ्चस्तां उ पराच आहुर्ये पराञ्चस्तां उ अर्वाच आहुः (I. 164. 19).

In the Nāsadīya Sūkta, we have reference to *Parastāt* called *Prayati* and to *Avastāt* called *Svadhā*, the higher principle which controls, and this lower world which is the externalised concrete form (स्वधा) of primordial matter. In X. 82.5 we find the परमधाम, मध्यमधाम and अवरधाम mentioned together; in X. 81. 1 the *Avaras* permeated by the *Prathama*, and in X. 129. 1 the *Para* with *Apara* or *Avara* implied as its opposite.

The conception of *Vishnu* and *Sesha* is the Purānic version of the *Parāvara-vidyā*, the absolute and relative aspects of one Reality manifesting in the Infinity of Waters (आपः), the Samudra, which is the abode of Vishṇu-Nārāyaṇa.

As stated in the Nāsadīya (X. 129. 3) the principle of individuation came into existence as the outcome of *Tapas* (तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम्) symbolising, as explained by Griffith, movement, life, and thought. This was *Manas*, mind, whose seed and germ is desire (काम). In Purānic symbolism *Vishṇu* is identified with *Manas*, the principle of *Sattva* (सत्त्वाख्यं ज्योतिः मनः), and his son *Pradyumna* is regarded as an incarnation of *Kāma*

Vishṇu is the same as *Parameshṭhī Prajāpati* whose abode is the ocean (ऋतसदन), and *Parameshṭhī* is said to perform the *Kāmapra Yajña* which unfolds itself as the cosmic egg floating in the primeval ocean for one year, a reference to the identity of the cosmos and the annual wheel of Time that creates it. *Yajña-vidyā, Prajāpati-vidyā, Saṁvatsara-vidyā* are identical :

संवत्सरो वै यज्ञः प्रजापतिः (शतपथ ११।१।११).

स वै संवत्सर एव प्रजापतिः (श० १।६।३।३५ ; ऐ० ४।२५).

The *Samvatsara* is a unit of infinite Time, it is the revolving wheel of Time. *Saṁvatsara* is the same s *Mahā-suparṇa*, the Great Bird flying on its two wings—

अथ ह वाऽएष महासुपर्णं एव यत्संवत्सरः, (श० १२।२।३।७).

In Vedic symbolism *Sūrya* is called both *Saṁvatsara* and *Suparna*. This Bird is the vehicle of Vishnu, *Garuda* or *Garutman Suparna* whose speed is that of the light in the Sun It is the rhythm of the solar orb which is manifesting as day and night (अहोरात्र), the two wings of he celes ial Bird, that transports the Cosmic Deity, Vishnu, through Space and Time (छन्दोमयेन गरुडेन समुह्यमानः, Bhāgavata, VIII, 3. 31). The great Vedic *Chakra*, which is the one wheel of the Solar Car (I. 164.2) is identical with the *Chakra-Sudarśana* of *Vishṇu*. It is the principle of Time, in whose revolution all creation has its being and sees its end.

Vishṇu also symbolises the *Avyaya-vidyā* of the Veda. There are three Purushas constituting the veritable Trinity. They are *Kshara*, *Akshara* and *Avyaya* as follows :

1. *Kshara*—Matter, Five Elements (—क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि)
2. *Akshara*—Energy, Movement, Life (—प्राण, कूटस्थ)
3. *Avyaya*—Mind (—प्रज्ञानात्मा and विज्ञानात्मा)

Vishṇu is the highest deity of these three, he is *Purushottama*, *Avyaya Parama Ātmā*. The three Purushas are the three Ātmans :

1. क्षर—भूतात्मन्—अवम
2. अक्षर—प्राणात्मन्—मध्यम
3. अव्यय—प्रज्ञानात्मन्—परम or उत्तम

The *Avyaya* is the substratum of all. The cosmic Tree called *Aśvattha* is *Avyaya*, a form of Vishṇu himself.

Vishṇu is the root of this Tree and also its branches. The tree is *ūrdhva-mūlam* and *adhaḥśākham*. Here *ūrdhva* means the centre, root, also called *Hridaya*, which is the secret abode of the Creator (गुहा). We get a bunch of appropriate terms for the unmanifest source of creation, viz गुहा, नाभि, गर्भ, उत्स, सानु, हृदय, ऊर्ध्व, योनि, अनिरुक्त, अजायमान, अन्तः, पर, अव्यय, एक, नीड, कुलाय, उक्थ, अमृत, परोक्ष, अग्र, अमूर्त, and all are the same as क in कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम. क प्रजापति is the great question (संप्रश्न, RV X, 82. 3, यो देवाना नामधा एक एवं तं संप्रश्नं भुवना यन्त्यन्या ।). He is the Great Secret, the hidden source of all Names and Forms (नामरूपे). In his dual aspect, He is both a revelation and a mystery, a light and a darkness, the One and the Many.

This is the basic conception of Vedic cosmogony. In the Purāṇas the *Guhā* or *Ka Prajāpati* is called *Vāmana*, the Dwarf incarnation, destined to become manifest as the cosmos which is His *Virāt Rūpa*. He assumes the cosmic form by taking three steps (त्रिविक्रमण, RV I, 154.2) :

यस्योरुषु त्रिषु विक्रमणेष्वधिक्षियन्ति भुवनानि विश्वा ।

It is essentialy the *Tridhāma vidyā* of the Rigveda, which is also equivalent to the *Sapta-dhāma-vidyā* (RV. I, 22. 16 ; X, 122. 3), the *Tridhāma* on the plane of *Akshara* and the *Saptadhāma* on that of *Kshara.* In the language of numbers Vishnu is 1 ; in his three strides he becomes 10, 100, 1000, त्वं विश्वानि स्वनीक पत्यसे त्वं सहस्राणि शता दश प्रति, 'Lord of the lovely look, all things belong to thee : ten, hundred, yea a thousand are outweighed by thee' (RV. II, 1.8, Griffith's translation). The epithet *Svanīka* 'having a beautiful form' is the same as *Vāma* applied to Agni (RV. I, 164.1) and *Vāmana* to Vishṇu. Agni is the Wonderful Boy and the Ancient Sage (वाम and पलित, I. 164. 1), and so is Vishnu a युवा कुमार and बृहच्छरीर—

बृहच्छरीरो विमिमान ऋक्कभिर्युवाकुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम् (RV. I. 155. 6).

How the youthful Boy measures out his developed form? It is through praises (ऋक्कभिः), the power of speech or वाक् or the three metres. It is like the diameter or the straight line emerging from the centre (गुहा, हृदय) and creating a *Maṇḍala* or circumference round itself which is thrice as big (विचक्रमाणस्त्रेधा, RV. I. 154. 1 ; त्रिभिरिद् विगामभिः, I 154 4). The diameter is like the Ṛik verse and the circumference the साम chant which takes thrice as much time to sing as the ऋक् to recite (तृचं साम). The rounded wheel (चक्रं वृत्तं) consists of four sectors of ninety each (चतुर्भिः साकं नवतिं च नामभि· RV. 1. 155. 6), that is the *Chakra,* or *Maṇḍala,* or the solar orb or the *Samvatsara Prajāpati,* which is said to describe its course by inclining at every point towards the centre (स सवंत्सरोऽभवत् सवंत्सरो ह वै नामैतद् यत्संवत्सर इति, श० ११।१।६।१२).

The *Vāmana-Vishṇu* legend of the Purāṇas is essentially Vedic :

स हि वैष्णवो यद्वामनः (श० ५।२।५।४) ।
वामनो ह विष्णुरास (श० १।२।५।५) ।

The Dwarf measures out his Giant form in three strides. ***Vasu-Rudra-Āditya*** are the three steps, and so also *Pṛithivī-Antariksha-Dyauḥ,* the three Lokas constitute the cosmic or *Virāt* form of *Prajāpati.* The Dwarf is the same as the Fiery Spirit or Essence hidden in the Cave (नम्यप्रजापति) attaining to its true inherent greatness (महिमा) on the plane of manifestation.

There are many other Vidyās in the Vedas amplified in the Purāṇas. For example, the *Daksha-Aditi-vidyā* of RV. X. 72, is elaborated in the form of the *Daksha-Yajña-vidhvamsa* of the Purāṇas Aditi as Infinite Nature is the Mother of Daksha (अदितेर्दक्षो अजायत X. 72 4), but in the created cosmos Daksha as *Prājapati* is the director of *Yajña* and thus father of that aspect of Aditi who is comprehended in each *Yajña maṇḍala.* Daksha is the genius of creation and begets many daughters, who are the mothers of the universe. But he slights Satī, the One

Universal Mother and his sacrifice assumes a terrific mortal visage and is abruptly ended Each individual effort cut off from the collective source suffers this disaster The same Satī signifies Soma, and her husband Rudra is the awful Agni (घोर अग्नि). In the next birth she becomes Pārvatī, daughter of Himālaya, the snow-covered mountain, where snow (हिम) is the symbol of flowing *Soma* She and Śiva both undergo *tapas* and are united as *Agni* and *Soma* in the *Ardhanārīśvara* form which carries out the creative process and begets *Skanda* or *Kumāra* The *Agni-Soma-vidyā* is *Yajña vidyā* and is equivalent to the *Ardhanarīśavara vidyā* of the Purānas. Biologically each female conceals within her the half-male form, and *vice versa*

स्त्रिय सतीस्तां उ मे पुंस आहु (RV I 164 16)

The ब्र औदन-प्रवर्ग्यविद्या of the Veda is expressive of deep meaning Brahma as Agni is the *Annāda*, 'Eater of Food' its food is *Odana*, the Essence or Energy, which activates its own centre, is its *Brahmaudana*, and all living organisms which assimilate food also eliminate some refuse which is the *Pravargya* or rejected portion from the organism This is the basic law of Life The eater of *Pravargya* is symbolised as *Varāha* The universe is the outcome of the energy transformed by Brahman, i e the plate leaving (उच्छिष्ट) of the food consumed by Brahman (उच्छिष्टाज् जज्ञिरे सर्वम्). The *Varāha* is the divine agency which eats or collects the *Yajñocchishta* portion, in other words the material world lost in the primeval ocean of infinite energy is lifted or resumed by the Boar The Purānas speak of several kinds of *Varāhas*, viz आदिवराह, यज्ञवराह, श्वेतवराह ब्रह्मवराह and एमूषवरा (RV. VIII 66. 10, which refers to the last form) The *Ādi-varāha* belongs to the *Svayambhū-Prajāpati* and *Yajña-varāha* to the *Parameshthī-Prajāpati*, who is also called *Riti* or *Āpo Mandala*. To Sūrya belongs the *Śveta varāha*, to *Candra* the *Brahma varāha* and to *Prithivī* the *Emūsha varāha* The पञ्चवराहकी विद्या is closely related to the पञ्चरात्र कामप्रयज्ञ of *Parameshthī Prajāpati* by which the succession of *Pañca Prajāpatis* is brought into being (as given in the Śatapatha, XI 1 6 1-20) The Vedic *Pravargya Vidyā* and the Purāṇic *Varāha Vidyā* explain each other In a brilliant description of the *Yajña-varāha*, the Matsya Purāṇa calls him प्रवर्ग्यावर्तभूषण, i e adorned by the hairy whorls of *Pravargya* (248 73), the hair or matted locks always being taken as a typical form of *Pravargya*, which a living body throws out of itself.

The most important *Veda-vidyā* is the *Agni-chayana-vidyā*, in which various fire-altars are built for the kindling of the Fires in successive layers of bricks We get a detailed description in the Yajurveda (Books XI-XVIII) and the Śatapatha Brāhmana (Bks VI X) The Agni thus kindled is the miraculous *Kumāra* (चित्र. शिशु , RV X 1 2 , also Śatapatha X 1. 3) This corresponds to the *Kumāra-*

janma episode of the Purāṇas, to which the Matsya Purāṇa devotes about 1500 verses (chs 145 159) in a literary style of great strength and beauty The poem *Kumārasambhava* of Kālidāsa is a magnificent version of the Birth of Kumāra in poetic style of the Purāṇic legend, and both derive their rich symbolism from the Vedic sources Kālidāsa conceives of the birth of three Kumāras, viz Skanda in the *Kumārasambhava*, Āyu in the *Vikramorvaśīya*, and Bharata in the *Abhijñāna-śākuntala* These three together form a complete theme, corresponding to the Vedic principle of Trinity or the Three Fires The *Chiti Agni* is named Chitra (तस्य चितस्य नाम करोति......चित्रनामानं करोति चित्रोऽसीति सर्वाणि हि चित्राण्यग्निः, श० ६।१।३।२०)

It corresponds to the statement of Kālidāsa about Skanda , अत्यादित्यं हुतवहमुखे सम्भृत तद्धि तेज. (Meghadūta) The Śatapatha explains in detail the birth of Kumāra by the union of संवत्सर with उषा—संवत्सर उषसि रेतोऽसिञ्चत्स संवत्सरे कुमारोऽजायत सोऽरोदीत् । तं प्रजापतिरब्रवीत् कुमार कि रोदिषि . . तमब्रवीद् रुद्रोऽसीति । तद्यस्य तन्नामाकरोदग्निस्तद्रूपमभवदग्निर्वै रुद्रो यदरोदीत्तस्माद्रुद्रः (श० ६।१।३।८-१०). What it means explains the nature of Kumāra as Agni. The Āditya is the Prajāpati Agni depositing its seed or warmth in the Dawn as it fills the sky daily That warmth accumulates for one year and becomes the Agni in the womb of mother Earth This Agni is the eternal Child coming to life in plants and trees The same Fire manifests in the birth of the developed foetus amongst animals and men. It is the manifestation of Agni-Kumāra or Chitra Śiśu on the three planes of Matter, Life and Mind, as seen in plants, animals and men respectively The Ashtamūrti vidyā of the Purāṇas called the *Raudra sarga* (Mārk., 52 1-9) corresponds to the *Agnirūpa vidyā* of the Śatapatha, or the *Chitraśiśu* conception of the Rigveda (X 1 2), or more specifically the birth of Kumāra and his motivating the car (i e the body)

> यं कुमार नवं रथमचक्रं मनसाकृणोः । एकेष विश्वत प्राञ्चमपश्यन्नधि तिष्ठसि ॥
> यं कुमार प्रावर्तयो रथं विप्रेभ्यस्परि । तं सामानु प्रावर्तत समितो नाव्याहितम् ॥
> कः कुमारमजनयद्रथं को निरवर्तयत् । क स्वित् तदद्य नो ब्रूयादनुदेयी यथाभवत् ॥ (RV.X. 135 3-5).

In the Rigveda also the Kumāra is fed in the mouth with sweet milk by the mothers (X 1 3) The motif of the Birth of Kumāra supplies the key to many a legend of the Vedas and the Purāṇas Kumāra is Agni, or which is the same thing as Agni's son, and Agni is identified with Indra, Prāṇa, Manu and Brahman (Manu Smṛti, XII 123). Kumāra is the germ of life in kine and mares, in plants of earth and in womankind (RV. VII. 102. 2). The seed is originally one, a single branch, which on sprouting becomes manifold वि-शाख, (शाखाभिधा समाख्याताः षट्सु वक्त्रेषु विस्तृता ॥ यतस्ततो विशाखो-सौ ख्यातो लोकेषु षण्मुख । मत्स्य १५७।२-३). It is exactly the Vedic conception of the पंचचितिक चित्याग्नि (corresponding to the Five Bhūtas) together

with the sixth one called चितेनिधेय, which is अमृतप्राणाग्नि, i. e the immortal life-principle coupled with the material one. These refer to the six faces of Kumāra, whence he is called *Shadānana* in the Purānas Analogous to this is the conception of *Pañcānana Śiva*, Śiva whith five faces, which as explained by the Vishnudharmottara are the five material elements To this is added the sixth mouth, viz Agni-Rudra or the immortal चितेनिधेय अग्नि. In the Tantras the five faces are the five material *chakras* and the sixth one the *Ājñā chakra* which transcends the five Bhūtas, and which is the abode of *Śiva-Pārvatī* This is the garland of lotuses (पुष्करस्रज्) worn by the Twin Aśvins and also by Indra (Tāndya, XVIII 9 6) The Aśvins are Dyāvāpṛthivī, the Universal Parents (पितरौ), corresponding to पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ, or to अग्नि and आदित्य (इमे ह वै द्यावापृथिवी प्रत्यक्षमश्विनो, इमे हीदं सर्वमाश्नुवाता, पुष्करस्रजाविति अग्निरेवास्यै (पृथिव्यै) पुष्करमादित्योऽमुष्यै (दिवे), श० ४।१।५।१६). Indra and Kumāra are both forms of Agni Indra is born obliquely from the side (तिरश्चता पार्श्वान्निर्गमाणि, RV. IV 18 2), and so is Kumāra Skanda (वामं विदार्य निष्क्रान्तः सुतो देव्या पुन. शिशु, मत्स्य, 15). 1). Macdonell opines that this unnatural birth 'may possibly be derived from the notion of lightning breaking from the side of the storm-cloud' (Vedic Mythology, p 59) In fact, it has reference to what is called the तिरश्चीन रश्मि, the transverse severing line between Heaven and Earth (अध. स्विद्-उपरिस्विद्, अवस्तात्-परस्तात्, Nāsadīya Sūkta RV. X. 129 5), between *Ūrdhva* and *Adhas* (Gītā, XV 1) where *Ūrdhva* means the centre and *Adhas*, the periphery or Mahimā-Mandala of the cosmic Tree. In other words Agni is threefold, *Gārhapatya*, *Dakshināgni* and *Āhavanīya*, corresponding to *Prāna*, the focal point between the two Clashing Rocks of Prāna-Apāna, as stated in the Katha-Upaniṣad :—

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणमुन्नयत्यपानं प्रत्यगस्यति । मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते ॥ (Katha, V 3).

The *Vyāna*, is the same as the Dwarf residing in the cavity of the heart (हृदयगुहा), the invisible germ or centre of life within the body, also called the अश्माखण्, the adamantine stone which pulverizes everything that collides with it, but itself remains inviolate (Chhāndogya, I 2 7) This point between the two extensions or poles, is the *oblique* ray (तिरश्चीनरश्मि, वामपार्श्व) from which *Indra, Kumāra* or Life proceeds to be born or germinate. Whereas *Dyāvā-Pṛthivī*, Heaven and Earth, represent the head and the feet of the Purusha, the central point is the Eye, the Awakener of Life (सबोधयितृ), which opens to the Cosmic Sun (ज्योक् च सूर्यं दृशे). Kālidāsa, and so the Purānas, refer to the *Ashtamūrti* form of Śiva (अवेहि मा किंकरमष्टमूर्ते., Raghu. II 35) These comprise the manifest body of Śiva (प्रत्यक्षतनू) and include *Prithivī, Ap, Tejas, Vāyu, Ākāśa, Sūrya-Chandra*, and *Hotri Yajamāna* as enumerated in the first verse of the Śākuntala Here we have the following three categories:

I. The Five Elements (पञ्चभूतs)—Matter

II Sun and Moon, the symbols of प्राणापान—Life

III Hotr or यजमान, also called दीक्षित, which is the Principle of Mind, the centre or नाभि of each यज्ञ (मनो यजमानस्य रूपम्, शतपथ XII 8 2.4)

The *Ashtamūrti* form inculcates the law of manifestation by the focal integration of Life, Mind and Matter into the form of a single *Vaiśvānara* Fire These eight forms are named as शर्व, पशुपति, उग्र, अशनि, भव, महादेव, ईशान, रुद्र, (तान्येतान्यष्टावग्नि-रूपाणि, कुमारो नवम – शतपथ, VI. 1 3 16), which are repeated in several of the Purānas (Cf Mārkandeya, 1-9 5,7. रुद्र and भवं शर्वं तथेशान तथा पशुपतिं प्रभुः। भीममुग्र महादेवमुवाच स पितामह. ॥)

The Purānas, extend the symbolism further by conceiving Śiva as *Sarabha mūrti* a mythical animal with eight legs (अष्टापदाशु), of which four (viz मन, प्राण, अपान, आकाश) extend upwards and four (viz पृथिवी, जल, तेज, वायु) project downwards The *Sarabha* is a *Mriga*, a form of Agni, the latter so called because it is concealed in the Bhūtas and has to be discovered out of them

Thus the Puranic legends had a definite objective, viz elaboration (उपबृंहण) of Vedic cosmogony into the cast of an extended religious symbolism. The Vedic *Somavidyā* or पारमेष्ठ्यसोमविद्या is presented in the *Samudramanthana* legend, the *Virāj dhenu vidyā* as the *Prithu-Prithivī dohana*, the दैवासुर विद्या as the इन्द्रवृत्र उपाख्यान (uniting Vedic and Purānic versions), the भृग्वंगिरोमय अग्नि-सोम विद्या as the *Sukanyā-Chyavana* marriage, the *Pitri vidyā* as the ceremony of *Srāddha*, the *Sāvitri vidyā* as the *Sāvitrī Satyavān* legend (in which *Satyavān* is *Sūrya* as *Satyanārāyana* destined to be renovated in each *Samvatsara Yajña*), the *Tapovidyā* as the *Vratas* spread over the whole year (the followers of which were known as the *Vratinah*); the Vedic *Paśu-vidyā* as the lore of the *Pāśupatas* who regarded *Paśupati Paśu* as the supreme mechanism of liberation The *Manvantar vidyā* was a part of the *Ahorātra-vidyā* or *Kāla vāda* which was an important metaphysical doctrine in the lucubration of the Samhitās and the Upanishads The key to the Purānas lies in the unravelling of the Vedic symbolism, and *vice versa* the Vedic symbols find clarity of explanation in the Purāṇic legends :

बिभेत्यल्पश्रुताद्वेदो मामयं प्रहरिष्यति ।

Veda should be supplemented with the *Itihāsa-Purāṇa* tradition, which throws further light on the Vedic legends, myths or thought The Vedas represent the snow clad Himalayan heights, and the Purānas are like the Gangā and her feeders which flow evenly on the plains and vitalise the spirit and saturate the mind with them. A classified and comparative presentation of the Purānic material is a task awaiting orderly fulfilment It will serve as a ladder towards the scaling of the Vedic summit, a purifying sieve to collect the mead of the Vedas in the vats of our hearts.
